

Disclaimer: I don't own Harry Potter. I just love the story...enjoy!

"Sooo...what are the chances that we'll get a nice quite...relaxing...non life threatening year at Hogwarts?" Hermione Granger teased Ginny as they entered the great hall. The said girl threw her arm around Hermione's neck and pulled her close that only she could hear her and whispered. "What are the chances that you and my brother make it through the feast without shagging your brains out...like you did on the train?"

"How did you know?" Hermione's eyes shot open and her face rivaled her boyfriend's hair. It was all Ginny could do to not burst out laughing at her.

"They made silencing charms for a reason Hermione." Ginny didn't think that Hermione's face could get any redder...she was wrong.

"Y-you heard us?" Hermione squeaked.

"Sweetie...you're a screamer...the whole bloody train heard you."

"Oh Merlin!" Hermione buried her face into her hands.

"Oh...by the way, I found these on top of my trunk on the overhang. Just how they got there I never want to know." Ginny waver a pair of pink thongs in front of her. Hermione quickly snatched them out of her hands and shoved them into her robes.

"Oh Merlin! Oh Merlin! Oh Merlin!"

"You sure like saying that a lot. I wasn't aware he was also the Patron Saint of Orgasms."

"Oh...shut up. So, I like a good shag. Does that make me a slut?" Ginny laughed to herself. Hermione certainly had come a long way from the bookworm that she met just five years ago. Then again, hadn't they all.

No longer was she the naive little girl that dreamed of marrying The-Boy-Who-Lived. Neville was cute and all, but he didn't do anything for her. Plus, he changed after the Chamber of Secrets incident. True, he did save her life, but he didn't do it alone. He had help, he always had help. Dumbledore was always there. She would be

surprised if the man didn't hold his wanker for him, when he used the loo.

That and the Daily Prophet kissing his arse every ten seconds, only made his head that much more overinflated, and it was big enough as it was. His grandmother made sure he had the best of everything, tutors, clothes you name it he got it. She often wondered if his parents could see him now, what they would think.

His Grandmother was another story altogether. To say that she disliked her would be an understatement. The woman was the bane of her existence. She didn't hate her as much as Tom...but she came in pretty freaking close. Her mother said to be respectful to her as all times. "She a very powerful woman and we don't want to make her our enemy." She was told by her mother on more than one occasion. Then again, her mother would be very happy if she became the next Lady Longbottom.

Ginny wanted none of it, but her feelings weren't the issue. Dumbledore had become quite fond of reminding her that she owed Neville a Life Debt. If not paid by her seventeenth birthday, he could claim her. As a wife...concubine...slave, whatever he chose. Because, Longbottom was the last of his line and of a Noble House, Dumbledore reactivated an old law that said that he could have many wives. Well, one wife and a shite load of concubines. So he could rebuild the Family Line with his seed. Seeing as she had little choice, she agreed to be his girlfriend. Ginny hoped that she could make him into something she could learn to live with. At least, that's what she told herself at the beginning. After the Department of Mysteries fiasco, she gave up such hope. Anything that was left of that silly crush she had died there. She would never forgive him for that. He wasn't a Savior of the Wizarding World like she was lead to believe...he was a bloody coward.

She didn't know what was worse. The fact that her so called Headmaster is always sprouting offs that greater good shite, or the fact that the git never once apologized for it. She was given an extremely long lecture on forgiveness by her mother, she really was blind to it all, and it was strongly suggested that she should take him back if and she quoted. "You plan to continue you education at Hogwarts." Bastard! It wasn't like she really had a bloody choice.

Ginny would snog Neville, if he pushed the issue, but it made her skin crawl every time his hands would wonder over her body. You could only play I'm-waiting-for-my-wedding-night-card so much. On more than one occasion that manipulative old bastard tried to slip her a love potion. One thing she learned from having Fred and George as brother is never turn your back on your drink.

Ginny was so lost in thought that she didn't even realize that she had taken her seat at the Gryffindor table. The first years had already been sorted. When the hell did that happen? She looked to her left and saw Ron getting about a hundred pats on the back by half the guys in the school. Though her brother wasn't the type to brag, he certainly wasn't denying either. Hermione's face was even redder than it was before. If this kept up she would pass out any second. All it took to make the herd of git to scatter was Ginny pulling out her wand. Her Bat-Bogey Hex was known far and wide.

"Who...is...that?" Dean asked. Ginny rolled her eyes. It was another year and another girl for him to drool over. Is that all boys ever think about?

"Damn she's hot!" Seamus agreed. Apparently, it is.

"Those eyes...those lips...those-" Dean was leaning over the table to get a better look. Ginny smacked him in the back of his head. Well, that felt good.

"Dean you git, she's a new Professor. Plus, she's old enough to be your mother." Hermione scolded him as she rolled her eyes and threw her arms up in the air, in disgust.

"Yeah...she's definably a MIWTS." Dean said grinning at Seamus.

"And what pray tell is that...it's not another one of those muggle sayings, is it?"

"Yep! It stands for Mum I Want To Sha...OUCH! THAT HURT GINNY!"

"It was supposed to hurt you foul git."

"Hey, what's up with Snape?"

"Who cares?"

"Well, look at him."

"Which part, that his hair doesn't have a gallon of grease in it, or that he's drooling at your would-be-girlfriend Dean?"

"Hey! I saw her first!"

"As if you even have a shot, you get more delusional every year Dean."

"No one asked your opinion Longbottom."

"Oh look, the Chosen One has graced us with his presence."

"I was in a personal meeting with Dumbledore I'll have you know. You should be grateful that I waste my time with the lot of you."

"Under his desk is more like it." Ron whispered to Hermione. She nodded her head as she held back a laugh.

"Yes, you never know when you will need to sacrifice someone to Bellatrix to be tortured, so you can run away." Ginny muttered resentfully under her breath. All eyes snapped to her, apparently she was louder than she thought. Ron clinched his fist as he remembered how Neville gave Ginny up without a fight. Hermione softly put her hand on his arm to calm him and gave him a look that said now wasn't the time.

"Will you get over that already? We rescued you didn't we."

"NO! Tonks rescued me!"

"Same difference."

"Shut it the both of you! Look, Dumbledore is going to say something." They all looked to the podium as Dumbledore stepped up. For a few seconds he said nothing. He seemed to be looking for someone. Then he signed and addressed the students.

"Ah, another year is upon us. It looks as if our new Defense Against the Dark Arts Professor has yet to arrive. Rest assured I have every

confidence that he will be here in time for class tomorrow. I regret to inform you that Professor Fintwick has taken a leave of absence for personal reasons. However, I am most pleased to announce that an old friend and former student has agreed to fill in for him. Let's all give a warm Hogwarts welcome for Professor Lily Potter." The Great Hall erupted in loud applause.

"Dammit! That means that he's coming here. I don't need that right now." Neville growled. With all the clapping that was going on, no one heard him. No one except Ginny, and it sparked her interest. Neville looked worried. It was a warm welcome from his usual smug pompous look. The applause was just dying down when a patronus burst through the doors of the Great Hall. Not just any patronus, but a full corporeal one at that. The silvery white stag charged down the row between Gryffindor and Hufflepuff tables.

"GET OUT OF THE WAY! GET OUT OF THE FREEKIN WAY!" Was what they heard as it passed by. Professor Potter leaped over the staff table in a twirling flip that left more than a few shocked. She landed gracefully and pulled out her wand. With a lazy flick of her wrists, a silent spell shot forth from her wand. The space between the two house tables tripled in size. Oddly, not a single student fell out of their seats, as the Great Hall itself seemed to expand.

The red haired woman stomped to the edge of the stage to meet the patronus. Her fists were clinched and she wore a livid look that Ron knew all too well. The stag came to a halt in front of her.

"Mom...I can explain everything."

"You bloody well better!"

From the grounds outside a roar was heard in the distance. It was rapidly getting louder, much faster than it should normally be. Everyone looked to the door in anticipation of what was coming. The noise was so loud that many students were now covering their ears to block out the sound.

Two motorcycles burst through the doorway. One was just a tire length behind the other. Both riders wore helmets that covered their faces. Their oddly designed robes were flapping behind them, parallel to the floor due to the speed they were going. It didn't seem possible that they would be able to stop in time, to save them from crashing.

Even the Professors at the staff table were taking cover. All except one, Lily Potter stood her ground was a look that could kill.

Both riders launched into the air, as they were casting shrinking and levitation charms. They flipped and twirled through the air just as Professor Potter did just moments ago. Their movements were mirroring each other perfectly. Both landing at the foot of the stage and in unison opened their robes. The odd robes were made of some dragon hide that no one had seen before. The inside of the robes was black as midnight. The shrunken motorcycles flew at them. The black inside of their robes rippled as if it was water, when the motorcycles passed through them. With a final wave of their wands the helmets dissolved away revealing their faces.

The older of the two's hair was as black as his name. Only a few random hairs fell over his face. The rest was pulled back neatly in a ponytail. It was held in place by an elegant golden clip that bore the Crest of the House of Black. He wore a neatly trimmed goatee on his handsome face. His eyes were gray and gave off an air of danger. It had the ability to stir something deep inside women that even Minerva McGonagall wasn't immune to.

To his right, was the younger one of the two. His hair was just as black but only came to his shoulders. In contrast to the other's hair, his was spiked all over the place in a wild fashion that oddly worked for him. He ran his hand through his hair, making it more wild than it was before. Ginny noticed the Signet Ring on his finger. Whoever he was, he was a Noble Lord. Brilliant emerald green eyes scanned the student body. This wrought a stir from more than a few girls. Even the Slytherin Ice Queen herself, Daphne Greengrass had a dreamy look in her eyes. A slow sly grin slid over his young face it was screaming with mischief. He lazily held out an upturned hand to the other.

"Told ya." He said with a grin. This made the other roll his eyes, as he pulled out a bag of gold and dropped it into his hand.

"You got lucky pup."

"That was pure skill and you know it." They shared a cheeky grin that Lily Potter knew all too well. It never ceased to amaze her how they could thrill and aggravate her at the same time. At this current

time aggravation was kicking thrill's arse big time. She went into full mother mode.

"HARRY JAMES POTTER, SIRIUS ORION BLACK YOU HAVE BETTER HAVE A DAMN GOOD REASON FOR THIS...AND REMEMBER BOYS...YOUR BITS ARE ON THE LINE!" Both of them jumped and shuttered, as their eyes widened.

"Why is she always threatening our bits?" Harry asked out of the corner of his mouth. Sirius opened his to answer, but was stopped when Lily flicked her wand and their heads smacked together.

"OW!" They yelled at the same time and started to rub their heads.

"Because it's the only thing that seems to get your attention, that's why!"

"I hate it when she does that." Harry said to Sirius as they turned around to face the wrath of Lily Potter. Sirius put up his hands in defeat while Harry gave his best puppy-dog face working his eyes for all they were worth. Lily rolled her eyes in disgust.

"One, I don't believe that innocent look for a second," She said as she pointed her wand at Sirius, then she leveled it at Harry. "And two that face stopped working on me when you're five young man."

"Worth a shot." Harry said with a shrug. Lily's scowled and he gulped. He was a good six inches taller than his mother, and his broad muscular form over shadowed her petite one. His magic was much stronger than hers, as was his knowledge of dark spells. There were lines that he knew that she would never cross. The same lines he put behind him long ago. Knowing all this, he still knew better than to cross her.

"Now Lil's-" Sirius started before her head snapped back at him, stopping him cold in his tracks.

"Don't you dare "now Lil's" me, and I swear if I find out that you dragged my son off to some damn Succubus Colony so you could go whoring. I will hang you bits from the tallest tower."

"One! I didn't go "Whoring" as you so delicately put it. Two, I was introduced my godson to Magical Creatures as part of his training, one that we both agreed on if you don't recall."

"I don't recall giving permission for my son to loss his virginity to a damn Succubus."

"Hey! I'm standing right here."

"SHUT IT!" Both Sirius and Lily snapped at him before rounding back at each other.

"That would have happened sooner or later anyway and you're being stereotypical. Succubus's are seriously miss-understood Magical Creatures."

"That's true." Hagrid agreed form the staff table. Lily snapped her head to him. He lasted only one second under her scowl before he quickly ducked his head. It appeared that his spoon had a water-spot that needed his immediate attention. Lily turned her glare back to Harry and Sirius.

"I'll have you know they're quite lovely creatures. Their beauty is as much internal as it's external. They have a strong sense of family as well as a playful sense of humor."

"Very playful...and energetic...limber...giving...adventurous...open minded..." Harry pointed out each adjective on a finger. "And the things that they can do with their tails"

"HARRY JAMES!"

"Oops! Did I say that out loud?" Oh crap! She used my middle name.

"Your dad would have been so proud."

SIRIUS ORION! What have I told you about encouraging my son?"

"To not too." Sirius said doing his best Tow Mater impression as he looked at his boots, because he sure as hell knew better than to look her in the eye when she was like this. "Don't make eye contact pup."

"What...like I'm new at this." Lily snapped her eyes from Sirius to Harry, then back to Sirius again.

"Perhaps this is a conversation best left for a more private location." McGonagall interjected. Though she greatly enjoyed Lily's giving the boys the riot act, she felt that it was going to get out of hand, and fast.

It was then that it dawned on the three that they were still in the Great Hall and that the entire school was in attendance. Lily looked horrified, Sirius just grinned and Harry gave a cheeky wave.

"I do apologize for the boldness of our arrival Headmaster. Our meeting with the new Minister of Magic ran a little longer than expected, I'm afraid. Then we ran into some old friends and had a very spirited conversation outside of Gringotts. So sadly, young Harry missed the train. Well, no point crying over spit butterbeer, as they say. Harry suggested it was a perfect time to test the limits of our new motorcycles. So to kill two birds with one stone, I thought it would do good to test the Wards around Hogwarts as well." Sirius casually said as he walked past Lily. She understood what he meant and gave a look that said that they would talk later.

"And how did they hold up Professor Black?" Dumbledore asked, catching the look that the two shared. He would have to keep an eye on the three of them. They were defiantly not the same people that he knew. If that was for good or bad he wasn't sure, only time would tell.

"We got through, so I would say that they could use some improvements."

"I look forward to that conversation."

"As do I."

"Good...good, now...Harry my boy. You still need to be sorted." He was the other one that the prophecy could have been about. Another pawn for the chessboard, this could be interesting.

"I think not." Harry told him flat out. This brought a gasp from several students, and a smile slid across Ginny's face. Got backbone...this one has...cute too.

"Excuse me?" A bewildered Albus Dumbledore asked. Not in all the years that he had been at Hogwarts had anyone refused to be sorted. He would put a stop to this and fast. The boy would learn just who is Headmaster here and who is student. Dumbledore looked into Harry mind and didn't like what he saw. With Lily as a mother he expected to find at least some kind of mental block. What he got was a full blown trap. He stood on a vast desert. Before him written in the form of fire ants was the message.

GET OUT OF MY

HEAD OLD MAN!

Then he felt himself sinking into the sand, as thousands upon thousands of fire ants swarmed his body. He could actually feel the stinging burn of their bites. Albus made a quick retreat from his mind, to find one Harry Potter grinning ear to ear. It's not every day that you can make a Wizard of Dumbledore's caliber run like a little bitch.

"With all due respect Headmaster, regardless of the different social types, we are all here for the same reason, to learn magic. My mother has told me of the different Houses and what traits they value. I am well aware of what traits I possess and what I value. Hardworking and loyal...intelligence and open mindedness...cunning and driven...bold and passionate, I value them all and I used all to get past your wards, did I not. I hold none over the other. They were meant to complement... not exclude each other. I understand tradition, I only ask that I be given time to get to know each House and their inhabitants before I chose which one best suits me." Lily beamed with pride at her son. He had grown into such a fine young man. Though she didn't always approve of some of his choices, he had the best of his father in him. It also looked like he actually learned some of her lessons, after all.

"You make a good point my boy. Where would you like to begin?" You call me 'my boy' one more time; I swear I'll put my boot knee deep up your ass!

"My parents and godfather were Gryffindors. It's as good a place as any to start as any." Harry turned to go sit at the Gryffindor Table. As he did, Lily walked over to Dumbledore and gave him a friendly kiss

on the cheek. He felt her wand poke him in the ribs as she whispered in his ear.

"If you ever violate my sons mind again...I'll feed you your bits for breakfast." The sweetness of her voice left a cold chill on his old bones. She returned to her seat, to find it occupied by Sirius. He quite effectively cutting off any chance that Snape could sit near her. He saw the way the git was looking at her, and he would have none of it. Lily just rolled her eyes at that. Like I can't handle him, thanks for the confidence Sirius.

"Sorry, old habits die hard Lil's" Sirius whispered as she took her seat between him and McGonagall. She understood he has been at her side since James died, and she also knew that she and Harry never would have made it, if it wasn't for him. She gave his arm a little squeeze, as to say forgiven. Then, she narrowed her eyes to let him know that he wasn't off the hook...just yet. He gave a small nod and turned his attention to the meal in front of him. One think he learned from living with Lily Potter was that she was just as quick to forgive, as she was to explode.

"For a second there, when they were standing side by side..." Minerva started only to have Lily finish.

"I know, you thought you had your boys back." Lily gave her a slight nudge and McGonagall signed, Lily knew her all too well. In her youth she was quite the prankster herself. As a Head of the Gryffindor House, she had to come down hard on them. Secretly, she would return the privacy of her room before she would laugh till her sides would hurt.

"I miss him."

"Me too."

"What's Harry like?"

"Well, as you can see, he was a lot of his father in him."

"Which, Sirius encourages I see."

"You have no idea."

"He also has your keen mind."

"That he does."

"Please tell me he doesn't remember that terrible night."

"There are some things that you can never forget. It drives him...the things that he can do...it just amazing."

"And freighting?"

"That too."

A/N: Well, here's the first chapter. I hope you like it. Now, I personally like the character of Neville. But, knowing his Grans personality and can see her eating all the publicity of being the grandmother of the boy-who-lived with a spoon. She would fill his head with visions of grandeur. Dumbledore would have to caterer to her if he wanted any control Neville. That's the way I see it anyway. Now, I am using slang words in this story, both British and American. I checked the spelling, for those of you that feel the need to only review if a word's misspelled. That's really annoying, by the way. I would love to hear what you think of the story and I'm always open to suggestions on how to make it better.

A/N: WOW! 21 reviews and only one jerk. Thank you for all the encouragement. It means a lot. This is a AU story, obviously. I am always open to suggestions on how to make it better. I've proof read this story three times now and I'm still finding small mistakes, so bare with me.

Lily/Sirius: Not gonna happen. He flirts with her to remind her that she is still a beautiful woman. All women need to be reminded of that. They are like best friends.

Harry/Ginny/Daphne: maybe...maybe not, we'll see.

Harry/Ginny: You bet your ASS!

As Harry made his way to the Gryffindor table, Neville got up and marched off to the Staff table. Making quite a display of it in the process. I think I ruffled Princesses feathers. Harry thought as they passed each other. Neither of them spared a sideways glance, as they did.

Out of the corner of his eye he caught a glimmer of orange...then red...magenta...and then the rest of the spectrum of colors in rapid succession. The source of the distraction was a first year girl's hair. There were empty seats all around her. By the look on the faces of her fellow first years, it would seem that they were all waiting for her head to explode. The poor girl was hiding her face in a long veil of rapidly changing hair. Somewhere under all that he heard a snuffle escape. Oh, hell no!

Harry lightly tapped on her shoulder. She let out a yipe as she jumped in her seat. Slowly she turned to look at him. Through a small part in her interesting hair, he saw a single crystal blue eye spying at him. Immediately it changed color, so it was as if he was looking at his mother's eye. Yeah, thought so.

He was often told he had his mother's eyes. The girl was mimicking, though he was sure that she was unconsciously doing it. Harry didn't particularly like the look of fear in the one eye that he could see. She was expecting him to tease her or worse. He gave her a warm smile and he saw at least some of her anxiety ease.

"Excuse me...may I sit with you?"

"W-what? Why?" She was in shock. No one ever wanted to sit with her, not for as long as she could remember.

"Could you take pity on the new kid at school? I'm kind of nervous." Harry whispered the last part so she had to lean in to hear. She giggled out an 'OK' and he sat down. There was a few seconds of awkward silence. Harry was hoping she would engage, but it looked like she was still to nervous or shy.

"I'm Harry by the way, Harry-"

"James Potter." She finished for him, though it was an octave higher than it need to be..

"Yeah...How did ya know my full name?"

"Your mums voice kind of carries." She giggled out and it was like sweet ocean breeze to him. It kind of made you feel bubbly all over, when she goes that.

"You have no idea." This made her upgrade to a full laugh. It took her a few moments to get it under control. Harry didn't mind all that much. Her hair settled on a bubble gum pink. Kind of cute.

"I...I'm...Emma...just...so...you...know." She got out between fits of laughter.

"Nice to meet ya Emma Just So You Know." Emma slapped Harry arm with no real force. Her laughing fit was in full swing.

"S-s-stop...y-you'll...make...me...pee." Harry noticed that her fellow first years seemed to relax more. The threat of her head exploding seemed to have passed. He decided to let her get some kind of composure back, before they continued their conversation. When she had, he reached over and parted the vale of hair and tucked them behind her ears. For the first time, getting a proper look at her sweet little face.

"See, I knew there was a pretty face under all that hair." Emma wasn't accustomed to getting complements and it showed, as blood rushed to her cheeks. Her hair followed by taking on the same rosy tint. She went to duck her face down out of habit, but Harry caught

her chin with his index finger and thumb. He gently lifted it back up till they were looking eye to eye.

"Never bow your head to anyone in this school. Especially, some damn Pureblood with a wand stuck up their butt. You have every right to be here, as they do. You have an amazing gift Emma. I know a lot of witches that would kill to be a Metamorphmagus. Don't shun it sweetie...embrace it." Emma's eyes widened and swelled up with tears. She then lunged at Harry and wrapped him in a fierce hug. She didn't know what a Metamorph- or whatever the hell it was, all she knew was that someone had finally accepted her. That was all that mattered to her.

Harry was a little taken aback at first, but then squeezed her back. He got the distinct feeling she didn't get compliments very often, he planned on remedy that. Harry felt his shirt wetting as Emma buried her face into his chest.

"What is a Metam- Metamor-?" Asked a first year who's name was Mark.

"Metamorphmagus...basically, it means that your a shape-shifter. It's a very rare gift."

"Emma, that's so Wicked!" Two girls squealed at the same time, as more and more of Emma's first years moved in closer to hear. The uncomfortable ice was finally broken.

"I-I never knew."

"Didn't your parents ever tell you?" Mark asked.

"No, they ditched me at an orphanage when my hair started to change colors." Emma said with bitterness in her voice. Harry placed a hand on her shoulder and she gave him a weak smile.

"Muggles huh?" Emma nodded.

"Freaked out a little I take it?" Gabby a white haired girl asked Emma.

"Big Time"

"That happens sometimes. I have some relatives...not the best example of Muggles mind you. Anyway, my so called Uncle called me a little freak once...once." Harry emphasized with a finger.

"That's horrid." Gabby, Emma and another girl by the name of Pursa said at the same time.

"It's OK, mom got him with her Bit-Buster Hex. I hear that he didn't walk properly for a month. After that, if my mom threatened me or Sirius bits, you better believe we paid attention."

"What's a Bit-Buster Hex?"

"Exactly what it sounds like. My mom created it when she went to school here."

"Why?"

"To keep a collection of git in line. My father being the Head Git."

"Your mum is kind of scary." Mark said and the other nodded their heads in agreement.

"And don't you forget it."

"I bet you have it coming most of the time...don't ya?" Emma pointed her finger warningly at him.

"Emma my sweet...that's a big, big, really big given." That brought a laughing fit from all the first years. Harry leaned back and grinned. Mission accomplished.

Harry slowly slid out of the conversation, as Emma got to know her fellow Gryffindors better. She could be very chatty when she wanted to be. Her , Mark, Gabby and Pursa were rapidly becoming best friends. All they really needed was a little nudge.

From the Staff Table, Sirius was watching him with an odd satisfied grin on his face. He leaned into Lily and whispered. "Well, he always wanted a little sister." Lily look up to see her only child sitting with a group of first years. The little girl that was on the verge of tears only minutes ago, was now taking requests on what color to change her hair to. That boy is always picking up strays.

"Well, you can squat and push one out...my child rearing days are over." Lily teased with mock disgust.

"You never know Lil's. One of these days, you will fall to my magnanimous charm." Sirius fired back.

"Well, I do have my standards. Sadly...you come up a little short." Lily emphasizing by showing the space between her thumb and index finger. She drawled out the last word in octave higher just to add insult to injury. She followed through with a cocked brow, daring him to challenge her.

"Subtle Lil's, if you wanted to see it, all you had to do was ask." Her eyes widened and then narrowed. OH, your going to pay for that!

"Some of us are trying to eat...Black." Lily pushed Sirius back in his seat and leaned over and glared at one Severus Snape. He lasted longer than Hagrid, but in the end he succumbed to Lily's stare.

"Well, good luck with that Sevy." Lily snarled at him. He was smart enough to keep quite. Sirius, however was not.

"A little to the right Lil's." Sirius whispered in her ear. She looked down and saw just where her hand was. She quickly retracted it.

"Tease"

"Perv"

"Card carrying luv." That earned Sirius a smack to the back of his head. "And I'm done."

"Smart boy."

Daphne Greengrass always prided herself on her prowess in observation. It was something that her mother instilled in her at a young age. Being from a noble family and the politics that came from being the Greengrass Heiress, it was key to survival. The endless parties that her parents would throw was her training ground. She was seen, but not heard. She could have easily eavesdropped, but Purebloods lied as often as they breathed. Body language was so much more revealing and Daphne was a big believer in it.

Through it, she read people like an old familiar book. She was able to tell what married couples were still in love and which ones hated each other. Who were secret lovers and who's love was not returned. She passed on everything that she learned to her mother, who would relay it to her father. Through the knowledge her family were able to strengthen their position in Wizard Society.

She was happy to do it. As Heiress it was her duty, but it came at a price. Friends and a normal childhood was a luxury she wasn't allowed. She was viewed as cold and heartless. As if human emotion was beneath her. When she had confrontations with her peers, she gave nothing away, no anger, no hurt, no sorrow or fear. Just a ice cold stare that unhinged any that met it. Thus, the Ice Queen of Slytherin was born.

She was viewed as unapproachable and she preferred it that way. It allowed her to focus on her studies and her favorite pastime observing the inhabitant of Hogwarts. She loved the way they interacted with each other. She would watch as best friends would become bitter enemy's based simply on blood status.

She saw girls have secret crushes on boys by night, but in the light if day sneer at them, to save themselves from being labeled a Blood Traitor. She found the whole thing quite amusing. The word Mudblood was thrown around the Slytherin common room so often that even the first years no longer were shocked by it. She never used the foul word herself, not once. Once Draco Malfoy challenged her as to why she never said it. She said the word was too filthy to soil her lips with, as she looked down at him as if he was a house elf.

She predicted that Weasley and Granger would end up together in her first year. That Professor Quirrell was to off, for lack of a better word. She saw little Ginny Weasley slowly deteriorate, while her brothers were blind to it all. Professor Lupin was a werewolf? Well...duh! Figured that out three weeks in to the year. Mad Eye Moody was really an impostor? Have you smelled the mans breath? Polyjuice Potion has a distinct smell...honestly. Rita Skeeter? Don't even get her started! And so on...and so on through the years. But she kept it all to herself. Sometimes she felt guilt about it, but she was a Slytherin...and knowledge was power.

This year, well it is definitely looking good. The train ride itself was worth the all the gold in Gringotts. Granger had recently learned the

joys of sex, and seems to be making up for lost time. The girl really had a good pair of lungs on her. Bad judgment...but good lungs. Good luck getting respect as Head Girl now. Then again?

Ginny Weasley was more interesting by far. Gradually, since the Chamber incident she had slowly been pulling away from Longbottom. The Chosen One was, as always...clueless. She thought that he saw her more as a Trophy than anything else. The girl was beautiful, so in that, he at least had some taste. There were times though when she looked like a caged animal, wanting nothing more than to run free. She could never figure out why does she stay? A mystery that she would have to be solved another day.

Now, Professor Potter intrigued her. She was entirely too pretty to be a Professor, or at least that was what a few of her fellow Slytherin said. She had to agree, Lily Potter's face was too warm and friendly. She lacked the cold stern detached look of Professor McGonagall. That and the fact that she was muggle-born, she would have a hard time getting the respect from most of her House. That was until, she flipped over the Staff Table and widened the Great Hall wordlessly. That was an impressive feat and one that took everyone by surprise. The way she handled the two Lords, well that was just...priceless.

Speaking of which, not one, but two Rebel Lords have come to Hogwarts, and damn sexy ones at that. She wasn't embarrassed to admit that she was affected by their bold entrance. She wasn't gay. It was just until that moment, there weren't anyone that perked her interest before.

They got through the bloody wards of Hogwarts! Hell, not even You-know-who has been able to do that before. Draco Malfoy gave it a shot last year, and it almost earned him a cell next to his dad in Azkaban. How he managed to squirm his way out of that, she would never know.

Lord Sirius Orion Black, Daphne heard stories from her mum about him. Word has it, that he was a bedroom kisser, whatever the hell that means. Before her mum could explain, her father walked into the room and the woman clamed up tighter than a Granger's bum. Her new DADA Professor was certainly entertaining. Watching him flirt with Professor Potter and her giving as well as she got. It seemed more like a game between the two of them. She saw no real signs of intimacy between them. Though, it was clear that they

were very close. That was something that was really irritating Professor Snape, to no ends. For a Slytherin, he was being pretty obvious about it. Well, she guess the man had a sex drive after all.

Daphne's eyes drifted to the new Lord Potter and a slow smile slid across her face. Damn, he's hot. Stop it Daphne! Your stronger than this! He's just another boy like all the others. He'll just distract you. You have better things to do than drooling over some new boy that looks all Devil May Care. Your stronger than this. Oh Dammit! Why did he have to take off his robe? Nice muscles...very nice. Oh, Bugger!

"I guess the gay rumors about you were false...to bad, a girl can dream though." Daphne snapped her head to the left and shot Tracy Davis a cold icy stare. Her one and only friend. She came out of the closet two years ago and has been actively trying to convert the witches of Hogwarts.

"Glare all you want Greengrass, but your drooling." Tracy rolled her eyes as she handed her a napkin. "I can't really blame you. He is a nice little piece of man candy. If he had breasts, I'd have a go myself."

"One, I don't drool. Pansy...yes, me...no. Two, I'm observing."

"What would that be his biceps or his bum, both are equally nice."

"So, who's your latest victim, oh...I mean convert?" Daphne quickly changing the subject. Tracey decided she would play along for now.

"Clo Chang or was it Romilda Vane...or maybe both. It was a good party if I remember correctly. There is always an open invitation for you Daphne. You know...just as an observer." Tracy added with a wink. Daphne face remained the same, she showed sign of shock or disgust.

"Nice try."

"Damn! I thought I would have gotten you with that one. So, which one was it? You never answered the question." The Ice Queen rolled her eyes.

"Right..like you wouldn't ride him proper if you had the chance."

Before Daphne could deny, Harry looked over his shoulder and made eye contact with her. She stared right back. She kept her face neutral, she wasn't giving anything away. No one was better at this than her. Tracy looked from Daphne to Harry and then back to Daphne. Nether was giving an inch. Harry cocked one of his brows. The corner of Daphne's lips curled for just a second. Harry lowered one brow as he raised the other. Daphne's eyes widened.

"Your blushing." Tracy teased.

"Shut it." Daphne hissed back, not daring to look away. Harry grinned victoriously at her, before giving her a slight nod. Then he turned back around.

"That was check and mate."

"I hate you."

"But I love youuuu." Tracy teased as she made a kissy-face at Daphne.

Ginny saw Neville walk off with Dumbledore and gave a silent sign of relief. The old fart didn't look to happy about missing his dinner. Not that she much cared, Neville was a product of his doing, as well as his Grandmother. She pushed the thought out of her mind. She had gotten a reprieve from having to spend another meal listening to him go on about things she stopped caring about over a year ago.

That was the day that her eyes were finally opened. The day that she saw the real Neville, not what she had pictured, no hopped, in her mind that he would someday be. She wondered if such a man even existed. It was the day Bellatrix took her. She never talked about what happened that day, well not to her friends that is. She could talk to Tonks. She kind of earned her confidence, seeing as she rescued her and all. She was a good listener. She never judged or told her what she was feeling wasn't right, just gave her a warm hug when she really needed it. She also gave her Shadow, her other confident. A stuffed jet black Panther that would purr when you scratched behind it's ears. Okay, she knew she was too old for stuffed animals, but he kept the nightmares away.

She was just happy to spend time with her friends and free of Neville for at least she hoped the rest of the night. She looked over at Luna at the Ravenclaw Table. She smiled and waved back at her. She really missed her over the summer break. She was looking forward to catching up with Luna.

She hadn't really been paying attention to the conversations that were going on. Dean and Seamus were whispering between themselves, most likely about their new Charms Professor. Hermione was doing her best to calm down Ron. She regretted let it slip that Neville gave her up so he could escape.

Ron and Hermione didn't know the details of her capture. They had split into groups so at least some of them would get away and call for help. That was when Bellatrix cornered them and Neville showed what he was truly made of. It took two days for Tonks to find her. Two days that she never wanted to ever talk about. They were really understanding with her wishes, even though it was killing them. Now, she just hoped that Ron didn't do something stupid. Oh, who is she kidding...of course Ron was going to do something stupid about it. He was such a Big Brother. Sometimes it may have annoyed her, but deep down it always made her feel safe.

Lavender, Romilda and the twins were going on about the mystery man that was responsible for their Neville free night. Unknowingly or not, she would have to thank him for that. She glanced a glance down the table at him. He was sitting with a group of first years. The girl that was sitting next to him had actually turned green with yellow polka dots. She stuck out her hand with a satisfied grin on her face. He rolled his eyes and handed her a gold Galleon...an actual Galleon...like it was nothing! The girl gave a cheer and quickly tucked it away. He smiled at her warmly. He had a really good smile. Then she lifted her gaze to see two intense emerald eyes. Ones that were looking right at her. Her brown eyes widened as she quickly looked away, her face now the same color as her hair. Only to find herself nose to nose with Hermione.

Hermione looked past her down the table and then back to her and raised her right eye brow.

"Shut it."

"I didn't say anything."

"I said shut it."

"And, I said. I didn't say anything. But...if I were to say something. It would be to remind you that you are a Prefect and it's your responsibility to show the first years to the Gryffindor Tower."

"And?"

"Well, technically...it is his first year."

"I hate you."

"So...do you want to tell me what happened outside of Gringotts?" Lilly asked Sirius as they strolled down a deserted corridor. She had already placed a silencing charm around them, just in case.

"No worries Lil's. You'll read all about it in tomorrow's Daily Profit." Sirius chuckled to himself, irritating Lily. She groaned and ran her hand down her face in aggravation.

"Why is it that when ever I leave you two alone, I have to read about it the next day?"

"It's not like we go looking for trouble."

"Sure as hell finds you though, doesn't it. Now, are you going to tell me or do I have to-"

"Yes, yes...I know...bits...tallest tower...got it."

"Sirius...please."

"Okay, My dearest cousin wasn't too happy about being Disinherited. She brought a few of Voldy's boot licker's with her. Downside, the bitch got away. Upside, we thinned Buttheads herd a little."

"How did the Ministry take that?"

"Are you kidding? I still got The Ministers lip prints on my arse."

"So, he went for what you suggested?"

"The man damn near danced a Gig. He said it was about time civilians stood up to them. Expect some new laws to be passed soon. With my and Harry's two votes each, as well as rekindling a few alliances. It would be save to say that things are going to change. Of course that's all above the table. Below the table...the Marauders have Auror privileges. We were asked just not to flaunt it."

"Wow, It did go better than we thought. The new Minister must be really desperate. Does he know our true numbers?"

"Not a bloody clue. I doubt that we would have gotten such a good deal if we returned last year like Harry wanted to. It seems that Dumbledore and Scrimgeour don't see eye to eye on a few things. All of them revolving around The Chosen One."

"Let me guess, Scrimgeour needs a poster boy and Dumbledore doesn't want to share."

"And the prize goes to the cute redhead in the middle!"

"Thank God we dodged that spell. At least when this is all over, Harry can walk down the street without being hounded by the press."

"He'll be the flavor of the Month after what happened today, but it will pass."

"What if Skeeter starts digging. According to her, the only way that James would marry a me was if I overdosed him with a Love Potion."

"Already taken care of luv. She knows better than to cross Lord Black. If that wasn't good enough, Harry reminded her just how protective he is of his mum."

"Sweet little git...do I even want to know?"

"No...and I doubt she will forget any time soon."

They continued on for awhile in silents. Familiarizing themselves with Hogwarts again. Every corner bringing back memories, some good and some not so good and some that just...broke you heart.

Lily stopped at a dark corner. She looked out across the grounds, over the Black Lake, to the mountains beyond and stopped at the rising Moon. Silent tears poured down her face, as the memory took her.

Her and James were suppose to be on patrol. Somehow they always found themselves sitting in this dark corner watching the moon rise. Lily's back snuggled up against James's chest. She was sitting between his legs and his strong arms wrapped protectively around her. She never felt more safe that when she was in his arms. She would always tilt her head to the side so her neck was exposed. An open invitation that he always accepted.

"I love you Lily." James whispered into her ear. He sounded so nervous when said it. She almost wanted to giggle, but that would have spoiled the mood. Then it hit her, he just told her that he loved her. Her heart jumped into her throat and she basked in the glow of the moment. For James it seemed like an eternity. She let him sit in agony for a few more seconds, before she took pity on him.

"Well, it's about bloody time, ya git." She teased James.

"Lily, your killing me here." James pleaded with her. She slowly turned around to look into his hazel eyes. She cupped his face in her hands. She searched his eyes for the truth. She found it, but she still needed to be sure.

"Is this real? This isn't just to get into my nickers is it? This is forever and beyond right?" She was surprised by the desperation in her own voice, but it was too late, it was already out there.

"I would die for you Lily. Not even death would stop me from loving you."

"Do you know how corny that sounds?"

"Doesn't make it any less true."

"It better, or so help me."

"Yes I know...bits...tallest tower."

"I love you James."

Lily crumbled to the floor. This was the very spot that they professed their love to each other. Sirius was on her in a second. He cradled her in his arms. She buried her face into his chest and unleashed what she had held back for sixteen years.

"W-why Sirius, w-why did he leave me? Why did it have to be him?" Came mumbled sobs from Sirius's chest. He rocked her back and forth. He prayed it would on some level help her. Emotional women was something that he knew, without a doubt, he had no clue how to handle. Harry was better suited for this. He always knew what to say.

"Because, he wouldn't let it be you. You and Harry were his life. He died the way he wanted to...saving you and the pup."

"I want him back."

"Me too luv...me too."

"How can you not hate me? I took James from you. Why did you stay all this time? You could have had any woman you wanted. You could have had your own family. You've sacrificed more than any Godfather has ever been expected to."

"You're my family...this is where I belong. I have no regrets." Sirius whispered to her. She nodded her head in response, but couldn't stop crying. She knew that Sirius would always be there and would never ask anything in return. He may have flirted with her constantly, but he would never cross the line. Her, Harry and Sirius, what an odd family they made her. Strong as steel and unyielding as magic itself. She didn't know just how long that they would sit on the cold floor. All she knew was that he held her till exhaustion took her. He would carry her to her room and put her to bed. When she woke in the morning a furry dark dog would be curled up at the foot of her bed. Just in case she needed him.

James made the right choice, when he asked him to be Harry's Godfather. He was a scoundrel...that was a given, but there was no man sturdier than Sirius Orion Black.

A/N: Here's another Chapter for you. I hope you like it. It's a little on the Fluffy side. Now, to answer a question. NO! Ginny didn't get Raped. That doesn't mean she wasn't hurt or humiliated. Bellatrix was trying to break her spirit after all. You'll get more info in later chapters.

"Sorry you got forced into this. Hermione kind of pulled Head Girl rank on me." Ginny nervously said, as she chanced a sideways glance at the new boy to her right. Damn he's cute! He's probably a arrogant prat, like we need another one of those around here. Harry grinned and let out a warn laugh that caught her off guard. Her tension eased a bit.

"No problem. It's all part of the experience, right?" She seems nervous. She looks like that...and she's nervous. In his opinion, she was a sight to behold. From her full lips, to her cute button nose, to her rich brown eyes, that reminded him of Easter Morning. It was all housed together in the prettiest heart shaped face he had ever seen.

"Yeah, but still...your being a good sport about." He's so down to earth. He's a Lord for Merlin's sake! Yet, he introduced himself as Harry...like the Title meant nothing to him. His emerald eyes kept pulling her in. They were so carefree and full of life, as if he hadn't a care in the world. She would have killed to feel that way again. She found herself smiling at him and not really knowing the reason why.

"Well, I probably would have just gotten lost. Now, that would have been really embarrassing." Man! she's got a smile that lights up the room. Harry found the way she would sometimes bite her bottom lip adorable.

"Oh, we would have sent out a rescue party eventually...in a week...maybe two." Dammit! That sounded a lot more clever in my head. Oh good, he's laughing...I guess I'm not a complete idiot.

"Good one!" Drop dead gorgeous and cool. What are the odds on that. There's gotta be a catch.

"No seriously, one of my brothers, tossed a Slytherin in a vanishing cabinet a couple years ago and we couldn't find him for a few weeks. Well...he was a real git, so we weren't really looking too hard." Brilliant Ginny. Now, he thinks you have a family full of psycho's. She unknowingly bit her bottom lip again.

"Remind me to never piss off your brothers." Great, she probably has six or seven of them. See...there is always a catch.

"Hey! They're all afraid of me, I'll have you know." Don't you dare underestimate me! Ginny stopped and rounded on Harry, as she said it. She didn't care if the top of her head came to the bottom of his chin. All her brothers were taller than her. They all knew better than to cross her.

"Well, the best fireworks do come in the smallest packages." Easy to get riled and damn sexy when she is. Harry casually took a step towards her, with his hands in his pockets. The sly grin on his face was teasingly mocking her.

"Are you getting cheeky with me Mr Potter?" Cocky Git. She took a step closer to him. She put one hand on her hip and gave a rapacious smile.

"And bring down the wrath of Ginny Weasley...never." Screw the catch. He closed the distance and broadened his grin.

"You do know...as a Prefect, I can assign you punishment." Okay, extremely hot...cocky git. She raised up one eye brow, daring him to challenge her..

"Corporal?" Somebody wants to play.

"Detention" Why is this turning me on?

"Pity...I was hoping you were a hands-on kind of girl." Tease

"I'm a wands-on kind of girl." Hands-on! Definitely hands-on!

"Well, that can be fun too." Damn she smells good.

"Your incorrigible...you know that right." I bet he's a really good kisser.

"And don't you forget it." Why is she grinning like that?

"You think I can't break you?" Oh, you are going down Potter and I'm gonna enjoy every bloody second of it.

"If you two are done, we would really like to get to the Gryffindor Tower." Emma interrupted before Harry could answer. They were on a roll and it looked like they could go for an hour or two. Both Harry and Ginny looked at the collection of first years standing behind them. Ginny wasn't sure exactly when they had stopped walking or the fact that she was standing so close to Harry. They were well within the danger zone. They both quickly stepped back from each other.

"Right...this way everyone." Ginny turned to lead them on and trying to hid the crimson blush that she was now sporting. Harry glared back at Emma.

"Hey, don't shoot the messenger." She faked an innocence look at him. Emma then leaned into the girl next to her and whispered. "If he had a tail, it would be wagging."

"I heard that." Harry shot back over his shoulder. He could hear the girls giggle in response.

"Why in the hell is he here!" Neville yelled, as he paced back and forth. He wanted to know why Harry Potter was at Hogwarts and he wanted to know right now.

"If I had to wager a guess, it would be to learn magic Neville." Dumbledore said smoothly and with a hint of sarcasm. The boy was acting like a Prima Donna...his Grandmothers influence no doubt.

"That's shite and you know it! They broke the wards and flaunted it in front of you. Their probably Death Eaters!"

"If they were and I seriously doubt that they are, we would be fighting Tom right now. As it is...we are not."

"Don't give me that! If they're not Death Eaters, then where the hell have they been for the last 16 years?"

"Professor Black took Lily and Harry into hiding after Tom killed James Potter. They went completely off the grid, as the muggles would say. And yes, before you ask, I did have people looking for them. Professor Black is anything, if not resourceful."

"I thought he was the black sheep of that damn family. Wasn't he disinherited or something?"

"By his mother yes, However his father never formally did so. Sirius and Orion may have disagreed on their believes, but that didn't mean that he didn't respect his sons power. Disinheriting Sirius would only have weakened the Black Family."

"Whatever"

"Do not underestimate him boy!" Dumbledore snapped at Neville. It was rare for for him to loose his calm resolve. In fact, Neville thought that the man was void of any emotion at all. The fact that they got past his wards was weighing heavily on his mind. Dumbledore pointed to the chair in front of his desk. Neville took it without question. Once seated, Dumbledore continued.

"I assume that you heard rumors of a group known as the Marauders?" Neville nodded. "Good...There were four of them, Peter Pettigrew, Remus Lupin, James Potter and Sirius Black. Together they pulled pranks that made the work of the Weasley twins look like finger paintings. Though we always knew who were behind them, they almost never got caught. Peter was the spy and for the most part the lookout. Lupin was the brains of the outfit, as he was the one that figured out how to pull them off. Sirius was the idea man and he was damn good at it. James was their leader and front man. And...the only one that could talk Sirius down from his more dangerous ideas. If you don't believe me, you should ask Professor Snape sometime."

"And your letting him be a Professor?"

"You're missing the point Neville. He hid them for 16 years and without accessing his or the Potter Vaults. Bellatrix's surname was originally Black, as well as Draco's mothers. So, trust me when I say...never...never, underestimate a Black. You of all people should know that."

"Alright, I got it. What about Potter?"

"Which one?"

"Does it matter?"

"James controlled Sirius, and Lily controlled James. That was 16 years ago. The years on the run has changed her I'm afraid. She was gifted back then and now...well, we will play the waiting game on that front. I still think that she will be the key to controlling the other two."

"And him?"

"I honestly don't have a clue." Albus had his suspicions, but he wasn't about to reveal them.

"Didn't you probe him?"

"Yes"

"Well"

"In all the years that I have been here, I can count on my right hand the number of who's minds were strong enough to stop me. All of them bore the name Black. Of them, only one had the audacity to attack and force me out. Harry just beat Bellatrix's time by two full minutes. He is as much Black now as he is Potter."

"So we wait and see?"

"We wait and see. Now, that we have that settled. I would very much like to get something to eat."

"We have a another problem." Dumbledore let out a heavy sigh as he started to massage his temples.

"And what problem would that be?"

"I think you need to tweak Ginny's attitude again. She let it slip how she got caught."

"To your Inner Circle I assume?"

"And a few others that were in ear shot."

"I'll talk to Ms. Granger, she should be able to keep the other in line."

"What about Ginny?"

"The girl will not make eye contact with me anymore and the potions never seem to make it to her lips. The girl is very clever and at Marauder level I might add. Tom was very wise in choosing her, as a vessel for his attempted return, in her first year."

"What?"

"Do you honestly think that she was chosen for her connection to you? She is the seventh child of a pureblood family. A family that has produced some truly brilliant Wizards and she's the first female in seven generations. You know Tom's obsession with the number 7. She has a very strong Magical Core, it would have served Tom well."

"Then, make her serve me well."

"There was a time, that she was blindly loyal to you. If you had treated her better, she may have willingly surrendered herself to Bellatrix."

"You and Grand both told me to view all of them as tools and disposable."

"Yes, but not to treat them as such. They follow you because they think you're the Chosen One. Not, because they like you."

"Like I care."

"You should, loyalty is a very powerful tool and one that you no longer have I'm afraid."

"But the Life Debt?"

"Boy, there is no Life Debt! There never was one."

"I saved her life!"

"Not once, did you selflessly put your life in mortal danger to save her life. That is the only way that a Life Debt can be made. You only opened the Chamber for Professor Snape and myself to be destroyed."

the Basilisk, the diary and Tom. We never even came close to dying."

"But you said she owed me a Life Debt."

"One, it was the best way to insure the Weasley's blind loyalty and two, you were obsessed with the girl. And by the looks of it...still are."

"She's the best and I deserve the best."

"Then, perhaps you shouldn't have given her up to Bellatrix. I hear young girls frown on that kind of behavior."

"I don't care! Just fix her...and make her more friendly this time."

"Hasn't that poor girl suffered enough because of our actions?" Neville stood up and walked to the door. Before exiting the Headmasters office, he looked back and said. "Make it happen...or should Grand have another chat with you?" Then the door slammed shut behind him.

Dumbledore looked over at his faithful pet Fawkes and gave a heavy sigh. "I miss him already."

Drumming his fingers on his desk, Dumbledore contemplated the new developments. Neville should have started to show signs of coming into his power by now. Perhaps all he was ever meant to be was a sacrifice. If that was the case, he looked forward to the day. Sometimes he truly despised what he had to do for the greater good. With a heavy heart he retired to his bedchamber, he had long since lost his appetite.

"I'm telling you for the last time, I...am...not...James...Potter. I'm...Harry...James...Potter. I just look like my dad. I got freekin green eyes, for crying out loud!" Harry threw his hands up in the air and started to pace back and forth. Ginny, Emma and the rest of the first years were finding the whole situation very funny. They even fanned the fire by making comments of how cute Harry was when he was angry.

"Well, there is no need for that kind of language young man. There are children present! You know very well James, that I'm color blind .

I expect better behavior from Head Boy." The fat Lady snapped at Harry in disgust. Harry reeled around with his wand drawn.

"That's it! She's going into the ash pile!" Harry leveled his wand at the portrait. Ginny stepped in front of him and placed a calm hand over his wrist. The simple act stopped Harry cold. She redirected his wand to the floor and her amused brown eyes lock with his annoyed emerald ones. She grinned and he snarled back thus...a battle of will ensued.

"She's gonna give him the..look." Emma told Mark in a taunting voice.

"That's cheating." Mark growled back.

"No it's not." Gabby, Emma and Pursa said in unison.

"And he goes down...told ya." The girls giving each other high fives.

"Will you let me handle this?" Ginny asked, barely keeping his laugh in.

"You could have done that twenty...damn...minutes ago." Harry answered threw clinched teeth.

"And how would that have been funny?" She shot over her shoulder, as she moved to the Fat Lady, with a little more shake in her hip than what was required.

"Now, Who an I?" She asked the Fat Lady.

"Why Ginny Weasley of course."

"Who is Head Girl?"

"Hermione Granger, I don't see the point of these questions?"

"And, who was Head Girl when James Potter was Head Boy?"

"Lily Evans was, they got married you know...Oh balls! I'm sorry dear, the old girls mind isn't what it use to be, I'm afraid."

"Ya think?" Ginny shot Harry a look over her shoulder that rivaled his mothers. He didn't cringe, but he sure felt the urge to. Harry forced a smile. "No harm...no foul. I apologize if I got short with you...Happy?" The last part aimed at Ginny.

"Not yet." Ginny said with a raised brow. Harry growled again.

"Your gonna make me say it, aren't you?"

"Yup" She made a popping sound with the 'p'.

"Do I have to do it in front of everybody?"

"Yup!" Emma, Gabby and Pursa copying Ginny pop to a tee. Harry shot Emma a look and she returned fire with a raspberry. Harry rolled his eyes in defeat. Taking a deep breath he turned to Ginny. He looked up and to the side, like he always did when his mother made him do it. His right foot went up on it's toe and he wiggled it back and forth.

"Thank you Miss Weasley, for showing me that it is better to solve conflict with intelligence and reason. Instead of using my wand, like my wanker of a Godfather." He said it like he was a first grader to his teacher. Ginny found it hard not to laugh.

"Good boy...See girls, any git can be taught." Ginny said as she reached up and patted Harry head.

"Bite me Weasley!"

"Oh, do I get to pick the spot?" At that point, the entire group of first years broke out laughing. After a few seconds Harry and Ginny joined them.

The Fat lady swung open and first years started to file in. Harry pulled Emma aside before she could go in. He squatted down so that he was eye level with her. He then pulled a necklace out of his pocket and put it around her neck. Emma's mouth dropped open in shock. She had never been given such a beautiful gift. An elegant looking crystal was wrapped in a Celtic Knot and when she turned it over there was what looked to be a Family Crest on it.

"We mover around a lot when I was younger. So, it kind of became a tradition in my family to give a gift to the first new friend that we made. You Emma are my first friend. That's the Crest of the House of Potter. That also say that you are a friend of the House of Potter, just in case some stuffy Purebloods give you any lip." Harry then took the crystal in his hand and and looked Emma in the eye. She found that she couldn't look away. She never saw Harry press down on it or that it drew blood. It glowed red for a second, before turning to it's original clear state.

"I have to go to the Owlery and send a message to a friend. You should be in bed before I get back. So I want to tell you something. If your ever scared or in trouble and need my help, hold this real hard and say 'Haven' and you'll be fine. It's kind of like a lucky charm." Emma's eyes teared up and she launched into Harry giving him a fierce hug.

"Your my first friend too." Harry heard muffled in his neck. He rubbed her back to calm her down. After a minute she loosened her grip and backed away.

"Now, go spend time with your other new friends and I'll see you tomorrow."

"Okay, Goodnight Harry." Emma said before she turned to go through the Gryffindor entrance.

"Night Sweetie." Harry said as she disappeared from sight. He turned to leave but was thrown against the wall by Ginny, her wand pushed into his neck.

"Feisty little thing, aren't ya."

"I saw what you did."

"Glad to see your keeping up on current events. Now, you wanna get your wand out of my neck?" Harry had been pressing his thumb against his index finger to stop the bleeding. Ginny grabbed his thumb and saw the wound had closed, but blood was still on his thumb.

"Oh, looks like I cut myself."

"Or...used Blood Magic."

"Saw that did you?"

"Your not denying it?"

"You know, you being pressed up against me like this is really starting to turn me on." Ginny jumped back, but still kept her wand leveled at Harry. "Tease"

"Don't change the bloody subject."

"Now, who's not using intelligence and reason...went straight for the wand I see."

"Wands-on kind of girl remember."

"Yeah, I noticed that all by myself, but hey...thanks for that clarification."

"Quit being an arse and answer my questions."

"Okay...but you have to ask me in your sexy voice."

"POTTER!"

"You call that sexy? Okay, okay, okay...no need to get your panties in a twist. I'm trying to protect her."

"Why does she need protecting?"

"Are you shitting me! Well, let's think about it. One, she's an orphan and alone in this world. Two, she's a muggle born first year. Three, we're in the middle of a freekin War based on blood status. And last but not least, she a female Metamorphmagus...it's not like there's a Sex Trade for someone like that out there...Pick one!" During Harry's rant, he was walking towards Ginny. With every step, she was stepping back. By the end, her back was against the other wall and her wand still at Harry's neck.

The intensity in his eyes and the anger in his voice, told her that he was telling the truth. His only thought was to protect Emma. She had never heard about the Metamorphmagus Sex Trade before, but she

planned on asking Tonks about it the first chance she got. She had jumped to the wrong conclusion without a second thought. She wanted to apologize, but her mouth wouldn't work properly. She could have sworn she saw hurt in his eyes before his anger flared back.

"You know...I don't owe you a damn explanation. Believe whatever you want Weasley." Harry stormed off down the hall. Ginny just stood there, leaning up against the wall dazed. Why didn't she give him the benefit of the doubt? Because she gave Tom that, and look where that got her. Then her Weasley anger kicked into high gear. She charged after him. Harry managed to get half way to the Owlery before Ginny caught up with him.

"Harry!..Harry..Dammit Potter!..wait up!" Harry didn't know why his feet followed her commands. He was pretty pissed at her, more that he should be for someone he just met. He didn't really understand why he cared about her opinion of him. More to the point, the fact that she thought he would do something bad to Emma. That she even thought he was capable of something like that.

Ginny grabbing his arm and spinning him around to face her. She was ready to unleash her anger on him, Molly Weasley style. When she saw the look on his face, her words got caught in her throat. She looked down, because she couldn't bear for him to look at her that way.

"I-I'm sorry...I misjudged you okay, but Harry you have to understand. Every year bad things happen around here. You kind of expect the worst out of habit. I just met you and...and." She felt a warm comforting hand on her shoulder. She looked up at him.

"Blind faith in someone you just met is a luxury you can't afford." Harry finished for her. His anger gone as quickly as it came. Ginny gave him a thankful nod.

"I get that. Your first instinct was to protect Emma, and it always should be." Ginny interlocked her fingers with the hand Harry had on her shoulder and gave him a weak smile.

"Sorry, I threw you up against the wall like that."

"I actually liked that part. See, I knew you were a hands-on kind of girl." He started to tease her again.

"Git" Ginny shot back at him. Though, this time it was more a term of endearment than an insult.

A/N: Sorry it took so long to update. I had to rewrite this chapter. As always thanks for all the useful reviews and encouragement. Just to warn my readers, this chapter is going to be a little intense. You'll get a glimpse into Ginny's past and why Dumbledore wants to control her. He believes the end justifies the means, and sees everyone as a tool. I hope you like it.

I wasn't having a good day...night...oh, whatever. I think I stopped caring twenty cuts ago. The table was unbearably cold and if that wasn't enough, my present company was undesirable to say the least. It had nothing to do with that fact I was currently strapped naked to a sacrificial altar. No, couldn't be that at all. I swear, if I live through this I'm going to kick Neville's bits into his throat.

The bastards didn't even have the guts to show me their faces. They were all hiding behind their Death Eaters masks. It probably meant that I was going to get out of this alive, but at the time, it brings me no comfort. Damn it's cold in here! Honestly! Could it kill them to light up a bloody fire! I could cut glass with my nips about now!

Then, she came in the room. The bitch that took me...correction, the bitch that I was thrown at, so a gutless wanker could make his escape. The face of Bellatrix Lestrange was looking down at me. I glared right back at her. I wasn't afraid...well, mostly not afraid. Okay, I was scared shiteless, but I wasn't going to let her see that. I do have my pride you know.

"Still so defiant? I thought a cold day in the dungeon would have broken you of that. As we all can see...you're quite cold. Hahaha!" She laughed like a little school girl. It was a bit on the creepy side. No, it was really bloody creepy!

"Well, this has been fun and all, but I have end of the term finals to study for." This made a few of them laugh. The bitch just snarled at me, that made it totally worth it. I smiled back at her. Lestrange slapped me across the face. Damn, that bitch can hit hard...okay, so maybe it wasn't completely worth it. My cheek felt like it was on fire.

"No one gave you permission to speak Blood Traitor!" one of them yelled at me.

"What are you going to do, strap me down and torture me?"

"Crucio!"

She held me under the curse for what seemed like forever, but I didn't scream out...I wouldn't let her have that. I felt like I was being cooked from the inside out. Hurts like hell by the way...I don't recommend it.

"Bella Stop! The Dark Lord has special plans for her!" A Blond woman ran into the room and pulled Bellatrix's wand away, at the same time disillusioning her face so all I saw was a blur where her face should be.

"She's unworthy! She's a filthy Blood Traitor!"

"It's not for us to decide! The Dark Lords word is law. She was to be prepped for the Ritual, nothing more. He wants to break her himself." The woman then turned to me and cast a healing charm. That felt good. I don't know about you, but I kind of like her. I'm not to happy about this talk of a Dark Ritual or seeing Tom again. Dad always said you have to take the good with the bad. Where was the good again?

"You two stay, the rest go!" Bellatrix ordered. They obeyed without hesitation. All but one, the blond still stood next to her. She turned to her and the nasty sour face that she usually wore softened considerably. When she spoke it was soft, almost lovingly.

"That goes for you too."

"No"

"You never took the mark. This is Death Eater business. Go...I mean it. I don't want you anywhere near here. Make sure you have an alibi just to be on the safe side. Please...just go." The blond went to protest, but Lestrage cupped her face in her hand, stopping the woman's protest.

"Please go...I'll see you when it's done." The blond nodded reluctantly. She turned to leave but stopped and looked back at me.

"I'm so sorry child." It was a whisper that only me and Bellatrix could hear. Then she was gone and feeling of dread came over me. I'm waiting for that good to show itself any minute now.

Lestrangle walked over to a table and opened a very large old looking book. The kind that Hermione would be drooling over, if it wasn't glowing with Dark Magic that is. She opened it and started to thumb through it. About half way through she stopped and looked back at me, with a grin that made my stomach curl. She picked up a long curved dagger that had ancient runes etched into the blade.

"Let's begin." I was glad that I hadn't had anything to eat or drink for a day, because I'm pretty sure I would have lost control of my bodily function right about now. For the next two hours I had Dark Runes carved into me.

I have six brothers, so I thought I was tough...I thought I could handle pain...I thought I could handle anything that she could dish out...I was wrong. I screamed till my voice was raw. I begged for mercy and death. I knew it would never come, but one can always hope. I was given potions to replenish all the blood I was bleeding out.

"Where is the bloody Order? Why is this happening to me?" My voice didn't even sound like mine any more. I didn't expect an answer, but I got one all the same.

"A fair question, so I'll tell you. It's not like your ever going to leave this dungeon alive. A few years ago my dear brother-in-law tried to use you as a vessel for our Lord to return. Do you remember?" I nodded and she continued. "You were saved. And a powerful possession of my Lords was destroyed."

"This is about revenge?"

"Do you believe that you were chosen by random? That it was due to your friendship with Longbottom? No, you stupid little girl. It was because of your Magical Core. Because you're the seventh child and the first girl in seven generations. You have a very powerful Magical Core. Even in your first year, undeveloped as it was, it still overshadowed many fully trained witches and wizards." She let that sink in for a moment or two. I'm in such deep shite.

"Now, seeing as who your Mother is, I'm confident that a good sneeze will get you pregnant. Still, were not going to take any

chances. I'm quite surprised to find you still a virgin. Your mother was known as the village broom when she went to Hogwarts."

"Shut your mouth!"

"Awww, truth hurts Dear? Do you really think that your father would have married her if she hadn't gotten pregnant?"

"Shut up!" Somehow I knew it was true. Bitch didn't have to rub it in.

"Were getting off subject. Tonight is a full moon, so the Dark Lord will bed you...and you will bear his seed. That seed will grow and these runes that we have carved into you will feed that child your magic, all your magic. When you give birth you'll be no more than a squib. I suppose we'll give you that death you've been begging for all night, or you could be our personal broom. It's not for me to say. A child of both your and my Lords magic will be very powerful indeed. It will be taught the ways of the Dark Lord, and when he has matured, The Dark Lord will take it's youthful body and bond his magic with the child's. What's the use of being immortal if you grow old? Then, the cycle will begin again." Things got a little hazy after that, I kind of passed out. That didn't stop them from continuing with their work. Oh no, they had a timetable to keep after all.

I woke to the sound unlike anything I ever heard before. It sounded like some kind of wild animal. It seemed to shake Bellatrix though.

"You two, stay here, lock the door and let no one in. Save me or the Dark Lord." She stopped at the door and turned and looked at me. She pointed her wand at me and casts her spell. My skin paled and my hair turned white, then she was gone. Even if they did find me, they wouldn't recognize me...I am so shafted. I'm gonna die here.

Ginny woke up screaming. It had been weeks since she had that nightmare...no, memory, that would be more correct wouldn't it. Luckily for her dorm mates, she had cast a silencing charm around her bed before she turned in. It was a force of habit now anyway. It was really sad now that you think about it, she didn't feel safe. She was at bloody Hogwarts and she still didn't feel safe.

She cast an illumination spell and pulled the Marauders Map from under her pillow. Thank Merlin, the twins gave it to her before they

left Hogwarts. It had saved her bacon more times that she cared to remember.

A quick look reviled that no one was lurking around in her room, or in Gryffindor Tower for that matter. She let out a shaky breath and relaxed. She quickly reached into her trunk and retrieved Shadow. She pulled her stuffed black panther close to her chest and stroked it's spine. It immediately started to purr. She curled into a ball and started to drift back to sleep. It was a crutch, she knew that, but it would be the only way that she would be able to get back to sleep.

Harry was on his second lap around the Black Lake when the sun came up. It was hard to believe that there was a time that he dreaded getting up early to run. Hell, sometimes Sirius literally had to drag his butt out of bed to run. Now, it was as natural as breathing to him.

Of course, this was just the first part of his morning regiment. Second, he would work on his sword play, then on to his hand to hand combat, followed lastly with Combat Magic. That is...if his mom and Padfoot would get their lazy asses out of bed and join him. He just finished his second lap when the old dog came up beside him.

"Make someone a Professor and they go all soft on you." Harry shot at him without losings his pace.

"Your mum had a bit of a bad night pup."

"What! Is she alright? Where is she?"

"Relax, she's over there meditating." Sirius pointed to the other side of the lake. Just like his Godfather said, Harry saw his mother sitting on a blanket, the picture of calm. "It just hit her all at once last night. This place holds a lot of memories of her and your dad. Every stone has a story to tell. Hell, I half expect Prongs to come around the corner any second now."

"DAMMIT, she shouldn't be here! I knew this was going to happen!"

"And where would you have her go, Potter Manor, by herself? I'm sure that would have gone well. No memories there at all. Look pup, she never really grieved your Dad. Sure, sometimes she cries at night, but she hasn't dealt with the loss...not really. Besides, she's

not a sit-on-the-sidelines kind of woman. She wants blood just as much as you and I."

"She was meant for something gentler than that. I chose the Warrior Path so she would be protected. I didn't want her to be put in harms way."

"She's your Mum pup...if you're in harms way...she's in harms way. You go...I go...she go...we all go...that's the Marauder way. We stand together...always." Harry bowed his head in defeat. He would be a hypocrite if he asked her to stay out of it. It was a little over a year ago that he followed Tonks into battle. She had no backup, and he wasn't going to let her go alone. His Mom had ringed his neck but good for that little stunt.

"I...I can't lose her. Dad...I can live with, but Mom...I don't think I can survive that."

"Nor I pup...nor I."

"I'm expendable...she's not. We know how Butthead likes to make people make impossible choices. If it comes down to me or her...you chose her."

"Pup?"

"NO! You chose her! I want a Blood Oath in this Sirius!" He knew that Harry was serious, if he used his real name. Harry's Godfather gave him a nod and the young Lord relaxed. Lily made him swear the same thing to her, just in reverse. He prayed he would never have to make the choice.

Harry planned on a full five laps around the lake, but as soon as he cornered the lake, he broke into a full sprint towards his Mom. Sirius didn't break his pace. He knew that they needed their privacy for the conversation they needed to have.

Harry dropped down on the blanket in front of his meditating Mother. If she knew of his presence, she showed no signs of it. He silently willed her to open her eyes. He didn't have to wait long. Lily opened her eyes and looked at her Son. She had used a concealment charm to hide the fact that her eyes were bloodshot from crying.

Harry saw through it, he always did. She saw the concern in his face and knew that Sirius blabbed to him.

"I'm fine." She reassured him. He didn't look convinced at all. "Really Sweetheart, I'm fine. Padfoot just over dramatized, that all." Harry still wasn't buying it. He silently waited for her to tell him the truth.

"FINE! I'm not okay at all. Is that what you want to hear? Everything reminds me of him. The lake, the castle...even that git Snape reminds me of him. Just let me deal with this in my own way." Harry's features softened a little, but his concern was as strong as ever. She hated that her son could read her so well. She cupped Harry's face in her hands and leaned in and kissed his forehead.

"I'm looking at the best part of James. It is a blessing that I don't deserve, but sometimes it can be a curse too."

"The Fat Lady thought I was Dad last night. I know you all say I look like him, but until last night I thought you were all exaggerating."

"I don't regret that you look like him Sweetie. He lives in you and that's enough for me, it really is, but sometimes...it just hits me all at once."

"But Mom."

"But nothing, you can't fight this battle for me Harry. I'm a big girl and I can take care of myself."

"Fine, but just don't expect me not to worry."

"Deal. Now, there are a few things we need to talk about. First, I want Grandchildren. Not right now, I'm not giving you permission to go shagging half the witches in the school. I know that ridiculous law says you can marry several witches, don't! Love only one woman and love her unconditionally. Trust me, you both deserve that."

"Don't you do this! Don't you give me your Goodbye Speech!"

"I'm not looking to cash out any time soon. You knew the moment we resurfaced that we had targets on our heads. We may not get

another chance again, you know that." Lily pleaded with Harry. He knew she was right, but that didn't mean that he had to like it.

"Mum..." It was just a whisper but it was music to her ears.

"I've waited seventeen years to hear you say that."

"I call you that all the time."

"No, you call me Mom, not Mum."

"What's the difference?"

"Nothing and everything. It's silly now that I think about it. It's what I called my Mum and what I always expected to be called when I became one. I guess it's just the Brit in me. I know that you see yourself as a Yank, but you're a Brit too."

"I'm sorry if I'm a difficult Son Mum." I'll call you that from now on.

"Oh, I would have it no other way."

"Okay, give me the speech."

"Okay, here we go..."

Ginny checked to make sure the shield charm on the ear rings the twins gave her was still in place. Thankfully it was. For once, she was grateful they were overprotective brothers. It saved her bum more than once, though she would never tell them.

Since the Chamber of Secrets incident, anytime that she received anything from them it had one kind of protection spell on it or another. She thought of the necklace that Harry had slipped Emma the night before and smiled. It was really sweet of him to try and protect her. There were some that would try to use or hurt her, just because of who she was. She regretted jumping to the wrong conclusion and thinking the worst of Harry. It was just that outside of family, she never saw someone go out of their way to help a stranger without an interior motive. It wasn't that long ago she was in the girls shoes. She had lived the worst-case-scenario. She started to understand her brothers a little better now.

Fred and George stood back and let her spread her wings so she could find her own way. They didn't hover over her like Ron did. She knew if she needed them too, they would move heaven and hell for her. With a long breath she steeled herself for the confrontation she was about to have. She turned the corner to find the door to Dumbledore's office open and the man at his desk patiently waiting her arrival.

"You summoned me Headmaster?" The disdain in Ginny's voice was overpowering and it quite effectively set the mood of the meeting.

"Ah...Ms. Weasley, thank you for joining me so promptly this morning...care for a lemon drop?"

"No, and I don't want any tea either...let's just get this over with." Ginny said as she plopped down in the seat across from Dumbledore. She focused on his crooked nose so to avoid direct eye contact. Dodge Dumbledore tilted his head down and peered over his spectacles. Thrust Ginny causally inspected her fingernails with a slight smile. Parry Dumbledore signed. Clever girl.

"When I made you a prefect I assumed you understood loyalty and duty Ms Weasley. There are certain details that happened at the Department of Mysteries that need not become public knowledge."

"No...you made me a prefect so you could tighten that leash you saddled me with. That and so you could keep a better eye on me. Now, as for what I said the dinner last night, your golden boy's short comings aren't my problem anymore. You have Bellatrix Lestrange perform a Dark Ritual on you, and see if you don't get a little pissy about it."

"Ginny you have every right to be angry with Neville, but I must remind you that..."

"Yes, yes, yes...I know. Were in the middle of a war...sacrifices must be made...the greater good...blah, blah, blah. YOU WEREN'T STRIPPED NAKED ON A SACRIFICIAL ALTER AND HAD DARK RUNES CARVED INTO YOUR FLESH! SO YOU DON'T GET TO JUDGE ME YOU SELF-RIGHTEOUS ARSE!" Ginny launched out of her chair and slammed her fists down on Dumbledore's desk. The

headmaster sat unflinching at her outburst. It was to be expected, she was a Weasley after all.

Several of the portraits of Hogwarts previous Headmasters and Headmistress yelled out in outrage. Not for her behavior, but for what the girl had endured. The most vocal was the portrait of Headmistress Derwent. Ginny looked up to meet her gaze, and saw outrage and shock.

"Albus! You never mentioned that! What this child has suffered..."

"Not now Dilys!" Dumbledore snapped over his shoulder at the portrait, which earned him a hateful glare. She then looked back at Ginny and mouthed the words. Room of Requirement. The slightest curve of Ginny's lips acknowledged the message.

"Ms Weasley, we rescued you before the ritual was completed if I recall, and you have no lasting effects of it. I dare say, you don't have so much as a scar."

"We...we? There was no we involved in my rescue. You couldn't be bothered. You said that it would have cost too many lives to come get me. What did you call me again? Oh yes...a Casualty of War! If it wasn't for Tonks and Shadow there is no telling what they would have done to me!" Ginny's eyes widened with fear by what she had just let slip. Dammit!

"Shadow? Who is this Shadow you speak of?" This had Albus's attention. There was never any mention that Tonks had anyone aid her when she sneaked into Lestrange Manor. He knew that the only way that she was able to get past the Wards around the Manor was because of her blood relation to Bellatrix. Once again he had underestimated the ingenuity of a Black, but who was this Shadow and how could he make use of him?

"When it becomes your business, I'll let you know."

"I must insist Ms. Weasley."

"Insist away, I'm still not telling." Ginny snarled as she withdrew her wand. She knew she couldn't win, but she would still have a go.

"Has it really come to that between us?"

"I'm done being the bloody victim. I'm taking back the life you and Longbottom took from me." Ginny ripped the Prefect Badge from her robe and threw it on his desk. She turned to storm out of his office. She had to get out of there, before he could stop her. She was a foot shy of achieving her goal when he did just that.

She felt herself being bound and levitated gently back to the chair she recently vacated. Ginny shot daggers at her headmaster as he invaded her mind for the information he wanted. Her most private memory's, thoughts and feelings were his to view and manipulate to achieve his goals. A single tear escaped her eye and ran down her cheek, as her new self-proclaimed independence was being crushed under his boot. He never saw her wand slowly point at him. Her hand was shaking violently as she fought for her mind.

Albus was hit with a very powerful silent bat-bogey hex. It hit him with enough force to knock him out of his seat. Ginny broke free of his probe. She heaved over breathing heavily from the strain she was under. She should have known that Fred and George's spell wouldn't have stood up to his. She wasn't sure if she had enough in her for another round against Dumbledore. He was already casting the counter curse. She had no choice. She had to use her weapon of last recourse. She knew what the bastard had planned for her.

"Winky" A pop was heard and Winky the house elf appeared beside her.

"Yes Mistress Ginny, How may Winky serve you?"

"Defend you Mistress Winky!" Yelled down the portrait of Phineas Black. It surprised even him that he yelled it. The portrait of Dilys Derwent looked to that of Phineas Black. He in turn gave her a nod. A secret pact was made between the most popular Headmistress and loathed Headmaster that Hogwarts had ever known. Dumbledore had lost their faith.

A look of rage spread across the house elf's face. She sent a wave of magic that sent Dumbledore on his back again. The house elf's magic had become much more powerful since she bonded with her Mistress. She hopped on the Headmasters chest and pointed her hand at him. The look in her eyes said she would kill to protect her Mistress.

"Ginny dear, we will not speak of this, but you must Oblivate him now." Dilys yelled down at her.

"What...but?"

"In for a penny, in for a pound child! You're running out of time child!" Phineas Black yelled at her.

"I...I've never done it before."

"You can do this dear. Just focus on what you want him to forget. Trust in yourself, you can do this." Dilys coached her in a reassuring voice.

"Oblivate!" Ginny did as she was told and found righteous vindication in it. She was really doing it, she was really taking back her life.

"Go Mistress...Winky will take care of the rest."

"Thank you...all of you." Ginny looked at the portraits of the Headmasters and Headmistresses of the past. They were all smiling down at her. None more proudly than Dilys Derwent.

A/N: There you go. You'll find out more about how Ginny escaped, but through other people's memories, in the next chapter. The Daily Profit will arrive and you find out more about Harry's past. If you have any suggestions I'm all ears. I'm still not sure which way I'm gonna go, with some of my characters.

A/N: Well, I guess my subtle hints weren't so subtle after all...Nice catch Nymphadora. I've always like you reviews. Since the cat's out of the proverbial bag...I'll go with it.

Ginny quickly made her way to the Room of Requirement. Several students had waved at her while she passed them by. She barely took notice, her heart was beating so fast, she thought it would explode any second. She had just gone toe to toe with Albus Dumbledore...and won. Granted, she had help and a lot of luck, but still...not many Wizards or Witches could say that. It was only when she was safely inside the room that she let herself relax.

Ginny looked around the room and smiled. It wasn't too large, just enough room for two people to have a quite sit down. Two plush chairs were facing each other, Between them was a small table with a tray of tea and biscuits. The room was covered in warm Gryffindor colors, she felt at home immediately.

"I must say, I've always liked this room. The magic alone is extraordinary to say the least. but to have a body of flesh and blood...well, thank you my dear. It's only been about 200 years, give or take a year or two."

Ginny spun around quickly with her wand drawn. Staring back at her unfazed was not the portrait of Dilys Derwent, but a woman of flesh and blood. The approving way she was looking at her filled Ginny with warmth down to her very core.

"Nice reflexes my dear." Dilys eyes shot down to the wand that Ginny was pointed at her and then back at her face. It was then that Ginny realized she was still pointing her wand at a former Headmistress of Hogwarts.

"Opps! Sorry about that." Ginny fumbled out as she returned her wand to it's hidden holster.

"Don't be dear, we're given survival instinct for a reason. Now...that being said, I know this is very vain of me, but would you mind terribly much?" Dilys pointed to the age spots on her hand and Ginny got the meaning instantly.

"My age work for you?"

"Oh, heavens no. I would like to pass on puberty again, if it's alright with you. Sometime before things started to sag would be lovely though." Ginny chuckled at the former Headmistress's antics. She thought of an age that she would approve of and let the room do the rest. Dilys Derwent was a sight to behold. Her hair changed from gray and frizzy to a bold shiny auburn red. Wrinkles and age spots gave way to young vibrant skin. Her breasts literally bounced back into place. The woman actually giggled when it happened. Ginny had to admit it was rather funny to watch. Dilys hands first went to cup her breasts and then to her bum. She grinned broadly at the firmness of them.

"Bless you child." Ginny couldn't help but laugh at that. Her current clothes wouldn't do at all...no, they were way too far outdated. Ginny thought of Professor Potter and what she was wearing at the feast last were proper, but very flattering Dilys's clothes changed instantly and clung nicely in all the right places.

"Wow! You're a hotty!" Ginny yelled. Dilys just waved the young girl off as she blushed brightly.

"No, really...look." A full length mirror appeared in front of Dilys. The woman couldn't help but admire the younger version of herself looking back at her. It had been a long time since this version of herself had smiled back at her.

"I must say, you do good work."

"Thank you."

"Now, I think that we have indulged the old girls vanity long enough. Please take a seat, we have much to discuss." The much older woman waved to the two plush chairs. Ginny nodded and took her seat, as did Dilys.

"What you did in the Headmasters office was simply amazing. It took a great amount of willpower and magic to break free like you did. I've never seen a Bat-Bogey Hex with that much raw power behind it before."

"Well, it's all in the wrist you know." Ginny joked as she tied her best not to blush. It's not every day that a girl get praise from a witch of Dilys Derwent caliber before. The woman seemed to sense Ginny's

embarrassment and softly patted her hand. Ginny lifted her eyes until she met Dilys's. Her eyes projected understanding and it put Ginny at ease.

"You're an amazing witch and don't let anyone tell you different." Ginny nodded back at her, as she pushed back the tears that were fighting to get out. Why don't my mum ever say things like that to me?

"Thank you, but I know a lot of that was pure luck."

"You could have just accepted your fate, but you didn't...and that my brave young girl makes all the difference."

"Forgive me, but aren't all the portraits honor bound to aid the headmaster?"

"Yes, that is true. But... Albus crossed the line today. Because of that, I was able to break free of the spell that held me."

"How?"

"Blood...it is the only thing that could have overcome it."

"I don't understand?"

"He knowingly and purposely brought harm against student and...one of my descendants. It's the only logical explanation that I can think of."

"Then that means..."

"Yes my dear, Weasley must have come from Derwent. I would keep that information under my skirt if I was you. At least until you get yourself to Gringotts and claim what is rightfully yours."

"But...wouldn't your..."

"No, I'm the last of my line, or so I thought." Unbridled tears fell down her face. "It means that my daughter lived...it means that...that..." No longer being able to control herself Ginny lunged into the woman's welcome arms. She found unconditional acceptance in them. That was something that she hadn't had since

her first year. Both of them held on for dear life. "I have a granddaughter."

"How many Greats does that make?"

"Let's leave them out of it for now, thank you very much."

"Can I still call you Granny?" Ginny teased.

"Not if you expect me to answer." Dilys fired back with a wink.

"I guess I'll have to stick with Hotty."

"I kind of like that one. It does wonders for a girl's ego."

"I aim to please."

"Now...to your current problem. As I see it, you have to learn to keep Albus out of your head. He will most likely try to gain control over you again. Next time, you might not be so lucky. I'm not going to be of much help in that area, I'm afraid. I'm a Healer, the Mind Arts were never my forte. What you need is a Black to teach you. They are the best at that, after all"

"Wait a second, how did Headmaster Black break free of the spell that held him?"

"Remember what I said about blood? His first allegiance, will always be to Lord Black."

"Could he teach me?"

"Possibly...but I think young Potter would be best."

"Harry?" What has Harry have to do with this?

"As I heard it, he attacked Albus when he entered his mind last night. Not only attacked, but ejected him from his mind. The boy is one of only two that have ever been able to do that. It unnerved Albus a great deal, thought he refuses to believe it."

"Serves the old bastard right." Ginny was grinning ear to ear. It looked like maybe she had a brother-in-arms against Dumbledore. Harry, you're just full of surprises.

"That he does my dear...that he does. Now, I think it's time you put this nonsense about a Life Debt behind you."

"And how do I do that? Dumbledore said it was Ironclad."

"And you trust him because?" Ginny's mouth dropped and her eyes shot open. Why hadn't she ever thought of that before?

"Because I'm an idiot." She answered herself. This brought a frown from Dilys. She didn't like hearing Ginny putting herself down, not one little bit.

"You are no such thing! Trusting yes...but stupid...Merlin no. He was an authority figure. It was only natural that you thought he had your best interests at heart."

"That's a cold comfort. Am I a free woman?"

"You were never theirs to control. What they have done is unforgivable. But, now is not the time for rash actions. They will pay for what they have done. Mark my words...they will pay. What you need is proof and a powerful ally."

"I have powerful friends."

"In magic yes..." Ginny got her hint and didn't like it one bit. If she was going to bring charges against Dumbledore and Longbottom, she would need some serious backing. She came from a poor family. She needed a Lord to back her. Anything less would be laughed out of the Wizengamot. But freedom through manipulation was no freedom at all. She was better than that and Harry deserved better too.

"I won't use him like that! I barely even know him for that matter. I doubt that he would even want to get into this whole mess."

"Fine, if that is your wish, but if help is offered...try not to let your pride get in your way."

"Okay, how do I get the proof to...hang their bits from the tallest tower?"

"Oh, I see you've met Lily Potter."

"More heard than met, but I am looking forward to it."

"I think you two will get along famously. Now, this is what you need to do."

When the Daily Profit arrived more than a few people were absent at the great hall. Harry, Lily, Sirius, and Ginny were nowhere to be seen. A fact that didn't go unnoticed by Daphne Greengrass. She had heard that the first three were down by the Black Lake. As to what they were doing down there would differ according to who you asked. A second year Hufflepuff claimed that they were fighting with swords. A fourth year Ravenclaw said that Professor Potter was trying to teach them some weird muggle dance. One of her own fellow Slytherin's swore that they were casting Curses at each other. Regardless which one was true or if they all were, she was going to find out for herself.

She caught the paper, as her owl dropped it, without even looking up. It was out of habit after all these years. She lazily opened it without even looking at the front page in front of her. It was most likely rubbish as always. She continued on eating her breakfast. It would be more interesting by far than anything The Profit had to say. Tracy took this opportunity to read the paper first.

"Sweet Merlin!" She yelled as she looked at the picture that covered the front page. Daphne turned to scold her friend for such a rude outburst, but the front page caught her attention. She quickly snatched the paper up to get a better look.

"Hey! I was about to read that."

"Did you pay for it?"

"No"

"So wait."

"A good friend would share."

"Well good luck finding one of those."

"Please"

"Oh fine! If your going to be a baby about it." Daphne spread out the paper so they both could read it. She was mesmerized by the picture on the front page. It was of Professor Black and Lord Harry Potter. They were fighting back to back against several Death Eaters. The article below read.

Returning Lords Battle Death Eaters

On The Steps Of Gringotts

The Wizarding World welcomed back Lord Sirius Orion Black and

Lord Harry James Potter today. After years abroad, they have

returned to our noble shores. As to where they were for the last

sixteen years? Lord Black only said. "Here, there and everywhere.

It's a big world out there, we never felt the need to limit ourselves."

It had been rumored that they had a secret meeting with the Minister

of Magic himself. Unfortunately, at this time we can not confirm or

deny that. A special Wizengamot Meeting was held to Welcome Young

Lord Potter into their ranks.

Move over Neville Longbottom, the Chosen One has some competition,

as Harry Potter now also falls under the Noble House Restoration Act

that Albus Dumbledore reinstated last year. Judging by the reaction of

some of Witches in I've talked to. Lord Potter will have to buy a dragon

to keep them at bay.

As his first act as a member of the Wizengamot, Lord Potter invoked his

Right of Satisfaction against He-Who-Not -Be-Named himself. He

claimed that on the night of October 31, 1981. (the same night that

he fell from power.) He-Who-Must-not-Be-Named broke into his family's

home and attempted to Genocide the last of the Potter line.

Lord Potter submitted his memory of the night in question as proof of his

claims. The Memory was viewed of private by the ruling council. Upon

viewing the Viewing Chamber, one would be hard pressed to find a dry eye.

"Brave and Noble to the very end." Madame Bones was heard speaking

of James Potter's noble sacrifice to save his family.

Due to the Right of Satisfaction Law of 1759 , No trial is required if

irrefutable evidence was given. Wizengamot voted unanimously in favor

of Lord Potter. By Magical Decree, all said property's, Wizengamot's

votes and vaults under his control are surrendered to Lord Potter. One

of my reliable sources within the walls of Gringotts, claim that he now

The proud owner of the key to the Slytherin vault.

"This will not bring my Father back or any that have fallen to that snake-faced bottom feeding pile of dragon dung and his collection of bootlickers. But, at least it might slow them down a bit. If he has a problem with that, he could always face me like a real man. But, I hear he's more fond of going after little boy's." Lord Potter told this reporter.

Lord Potter and Black got their answer on the steps of Gringotts no more than 30 minutes after he made the bold statement. A group of no

less than seven Death Eaters attacked them. One of our own

photographers was there to catch the amazing battle. The photo tells

the story so much better than I ever could.

When the last curse was cast, five Death Eaters laid dead, two fled, one

being Bellatrix Lestrange. (Lord Blacks recently disinherited cousin.)

Lord Black killed three and Lord Potter took two, both with hardly so

much as a scorch mark, to show for their trouble. By the Right of

Satisfaction Law, to the victor, goes the spoils of war and their vaults.

One things for certain, the winds of change are upon us. I for one will

sleep better knowing that powerful Wizards like Lord Potter and Black

are not afraid to fight for what is right.

Rita Skeeter

"Ho...ly...crap." Was all that Daphne could muster. It wasn't elegant or refined, but it cut to the point. Her eyes shot back up to the photo. There stood Potter and Black back to back. Curses flying in every direction. Both men were giving as good as they got. Without looking at each other, they covered the others back, as if it was as simple as breathing. That wasn't the thing that hit her the hardest. It was the look on their faces. They had the biggest grins on their faces and gleams in their eyes. She had the distinct feeling that they were having the time of their life.

Then it hit her, they had planned this from the start. What they did at the Wizengamot, they set a trap and the Death Eaters fell right into it. It was brilliant, now that you think about it. No one could dispute their claims. The Death Eaters proved their point. Anything that they did from this point forward would be, without a doubt, justified. The most important thing was they showed that Death Eaters could be fought, they could be killed. They weren't Light Wizards, that was for sure, but they weren't Dark Wizards either. Gray Wizards...yes that best described them. Rita was right, things were going to change. Finally, a side in the war had emerged that she could see herself choosing.

"I'll say this for them, they know how to make an impression." Tonks said as she put down the paper and laughed. This caught the attention of Remus. Looking over his shoulder, he saw his new wife had already finished off her ice cream and pickles. He gave a little shudder. Even for a witch she had bizarre cravings. Tonks caught his look and glared back at him.

"Don't give me that look Moony. It's because of you that I'm in this condition in the first place."

"If you say so Tricksy, but if he comes out with green eyes and unruly hair...I'm going to have to kill my new boss."

"It was just that one time."

"WHAT!" Remus spun around with a look of shock and outrage on his face. He knew that they flirted with each other constantly, but this...how could she.

"Gotcha!" Tonks almost fell out of her seat she was laughing so hard. "Y-your...f-face...p-p-priceless."

she managed to get out between fits of laughter. Remus growled at her and turned around to finish making his breakfast. Once there was no chance she could see his face he smiled. He had walked right into that one.

"Oh, don't be so moody Moony...moody moony, moody moony...say that six times fast. Hahaha!" Tonks had to stop she was laughing so hard. "You knew I was a trickster when you fell in love with me." Tonks got up and walked over to her husband. She wrapped her arms around him and pushed her ample breasts into his back.

"That's cheating." Remus said over his shoulder.

"Boo-hoo"

"You know that boy would shag you the first chance he gets." He said in mock resentment. He knew Harry and Dora would never cross that line. It was all part of the game. He knew that his wife was in the mood before she got out of her chair. The one advantage of being a werewolf was an amazing sense of smell. His was so much more keen than that of Padfoot and Shadows. Not that he didn't share that little trick of the trade with his best mate and the boy he considered a son. They may have gained the heightened senses from their Animagus forms. But they didn't know just what pheromones to look for. Okay, it might be cheating, but in the words of Dr Evil. "Boo-freak-a-dy-hoo" It's not like the girls play fair either.

"Remember that. If you take a step out of line I just might let him." Tonks knew that Harry got over that crush over a year ago. But Remus didn't need to know that. It would keep him on his toes and off balance. Just the way she liked him. The flirting was the easiest way to get Harry over his crush, and it worked famously. Now it was just a competition to see who could make the other blush first. If the side effect was that her husband wouldn't stop appreciating her...who was she to argue? All's fair in love and war after all.

Remus swiftly spun around to face his wife. It shocked and excited her at the same time. The hungry look in his eyes she knew all too well. The man really did know how to take a hint. In one fluid motion he threw her house robe across the kitchen, to reveal a naked quite delicious looking Metamorphmagus.

"I've changed my mind. I fancy a little protein for breakfast." Remus lifted Tonks up and set her down on the kitchen countertop. She wrapped her legs around him and pulled him to her.

"You are a wolf after all. Oh Merlin! that feels good." Dora moaned out as the old wolf slid his lips slowly down her neck. Her voice hitched when he found a particular sensitive spot and nipped at it.

"Yes...and we like to play with our food too." Tonks pulled his head back by his ears and looked squarely into his eyes.

"Shut the hell up and ravage me!" She demanded. He was about to do just that when they heard the tapping of an owl at their window. Remus and Tonks chose to ignore it. Tap...Tap...Tap...

"Go away!" Dora yelled. Tap...Tap...Tap...

Remus gave a wolf growl but the owl continued on. Tap...Tap...Tap...

"You have got to be kidding me! I thought that always worked?"

"Not if it's been charmed." They both looked at each other and growled. "Harry"

"It's going to keep on doing that, isn't it?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so. Do me a favor and give Harry a Bits-Buster Hex when you see him. If mine are going to hurt all day, so should his. I'm gonna go get ready for work." Remus turned and left the kitchen. Tonks looked at the bulge in his trousers and giggled. Nice pop tent luv.

After retrieving her house robe she opened the window and let the owl in. It dropped the letter it was carrying in her hand and flew out the window. She looked at the letter. It was from Harry. She would have to make him pay for ruining her protein breakfast. Some nice Italian Pumps would do nicely she thought to herself.

Auntie Nimpy,

Tell Uncle Moony to get off of you. I'm paying him to be mine and Padfoots liaison to the Minister and to vote for us, not to bang you. That's my job...seriously...I will have you.

Tonks narrowed her eyes at what he called her. That was going to cost him. She looked at the last part and laughed. "He really is a randy little bugger."

I need to see you. I met a muggle-born Metamorphmagus that needs your help. Her name is Emma. I'll tell you more when you get here. Please...I'll

buy you a pair of Italian Pumps...with stiletto heels, they can even be Dragonhide if you want. Maybe a matching purse to go with it, but nothing

more. I'm not going to cave in and give you a full outfit like last time. I don't care how much cleavage you show.

"Oh yes you will!" Dora countered. He always caved in and he always knew what she was eying. It was a little creepy, but Yay! She was getting new Pumps.

P.S. She's not here. She said she went to Hogwarts. Look, I know you can't tell me who she is or if she's in a safe house. If she is, have Padfoot

put some proper wards on the place. We both know Dumbledore's are shit. I just want to know that she's safe. If she needs anything just let me know.

Shadow

"She's a lot closer than you think pup." Tonks regretted keeping their real identity's from each other. It was for their own safety. He and Lily were still in hiding at the time. The Death Eaters were out in full force looking for her. Voldemort wasn't very happy that she escaped. Tonks thought back to her secret meeting with her aunt.

I walked into the front door of my mothers house, to find the last person I ever expected to see. Looking up from the sofa was none other than Narcissa Malfoy. My first instinct was to pull my wand. I followed it. My mum knew me all to well and stepped in front of her.

"THIS MY HOUSE YOUNG LADY, I WILL HAVE NONE OF THAT HERE!" Was she mental! That's Narcissa bloody Malfoy standing in my mums living room! I didn't care if she was my mum's little sister. I thought for a second that she was under a Imperius Curse, but her eyes told me different.

"She's a bloody Death Eater Mum!"

"Really...do you see a Dark Mark on her arm? I thought I raised you better than that." I check her arm and sure enough they were clean. There was no trace of magic on them. She may not have been one, but she laid with one. That was good enough for me, but mum was a different story. I put my wand away, but kept it close, just in case I needed it.

"I expect you to hear what she has to say young lady." My mum ordered. I opened my mouth to protest. Mum raised a her wand in a warning manner. "Not a word till she's done." I nodded. I knew better than cross my mum when she's like this.

"Thank you Andy, I don't expect you to believe anything I say to be true. So, I swear on my Magic that I will not lie to you." Narcissa said as she pointed her wand at her own chest. She glowed for a moment , as the spell took hold. Then she continued. "I was forced to marry Lucius through a Marriage Contract. The details are not important, know that my first loyalties will always be to Lord Black. Andy can explain everything latter. Time is short, once Bella get going, there will be no stopping her. When the Dark Lord arrives, all chances of saving Ginny Weasley will be lost. She's being held at Lestrange Manor. This map will shows you her location. Last I saw her, she was in the Alter Room. The wards around Lestrange Manor are blood based. As Lord Black, Sirius can get through those wards. I know you're in contact with him." She had my attention. Ginny was alive, more importantly, she could be saved.

"And if I can't find Sirius?" I cautioned her. She closed her eyes and weighed her options. Ginny life against her own. After a long breath they opened, they had a resolve in them I've seen in only a precious

few. She reached into her robes. She pulled out a small pouch and handed it to me.

"This has a vial of my blood, some ward runes, instructions on how they work and a porkey that will take you outside of Lestrange Manor. It will open a small doorway for you to go through. It won't last long, maybe a half an hour at best. You have to hurry, she has three hours tops." I take it and head for the door. I look back at my mum, for what might be for the last time. I saw love and pride in her eyes. It was what I needed. I give my Aunt a slight nod and then I ran into the night.

Finding Sirius's safe house was to terribly difficult. Getting someone to open the bloody door was something different. I got tired of banging and finally use an alohomora to open the door. I got pounced on by a three hundred pound black panther. I dropped my wand somewhere in the fall. His fangs were at my neck as a low hot growl invaded my ear.

In my defense, I didn't pee my nickers. I wanted to...but I didn't. Good thing too, he would have never have let me live it down. A green eye winked at me and then I got licked from chin to hair line. Okay, now that was just gross.

"Get off, ya git." I yell at him and he hops off me, then he prances into the house. As soon as I get my wand, I'm gonna hex him. I push it aside. I have more important thing to do right now, but later...oh, he was going to pay.

"Where is Padfoot?" I ask. He motioned to the open window. I go over and look out it. The full moon smiles back at me.

"He's running with Moony, isn't he?" He gave me a affirming nod.

"Is you mum here?" Harry shakes his head no.

"Dammit! I really need backup on this one." He let's out a roar that makes me jump. I have to say, he got that whole roaring thing down cold. It really unnerves you.

"No! you're not going with me." He growled in response.

"One, I'm going to sneak into Lestrangle Manor. Two, It's full of Death Eaters. Three, you have another two weeks before you can change back into your human form. Don't you give me that look. Padfoots rules...not mine. Four, your mum will kill me...your mum will kill me...your mum will kill me." He whimpered at me and I roll my eyes. I didn't have time for this. Ginny's running out of it. I make for the door, but he blocks my path.

"You can't go with me! A friend of mine life's is in danger. I have to go." I kneel down and look into his eyes. "If I don't make it back..." I couldn't say it. He looked so sad. How could I tell him goodbye, knowing it could possibly be the last time I ever see him? I give him a long hug and hope he understands. Then I leave once again into the night. The full moon shined brightly in the night's sky. I never saw the little shit dive into my shadow and disappear.

"Luv, are you all right?" Remus was leaning over his wife with a look of concern. She was off in her own little world again. She blinked a few times and shook herself out of her memory. She gave her husband a weak smile.

"I'm alright Moony. I was just thinking about that night we got Ginny back. Harry really saved my bum that night."

"Of course he saved your bum. He's been after it for years." Remus joked. It helped a little.

"So I guess I shouldn't be too terribly hard on him for interrupting our morning."

"Yeah, I don't even want to think how close I came to losing you that night."

"Funny how a near death experience will make a git ball up and ask a girl out. Maybe I should give him a proper thank you and shag his stupid."

"That's it Tricksy! Were having a go right now." Remus said as he pulled her out of her seat. Tonks tossed her robe across the room and eyes her man. Sometimes it's just too easy.

"Yay! I'm already dressed. Now, get those cloths off Mister." Moony grinned as his wife ripped his new suit from his body with unbridled

passion. Sometimes life is really good. He planned to enjoy it for as long as the fates allowed.

A/N: Sorry this took so long to get out. The chapter ended up being too long, so I split it. The upside is that I'll post chapter 7 next week. After I tweak it a little. Now, some of you will think I'm taking this a little too far. Let me just say that, if a wizard can turn into an animal. Why can't he take the were-version of the creature. It is a open market that hasn't been tapped, as far as I know. I still haven't decided on Ginnys Animagus form. If you have any thoughts, let me know. It can't be a lioness...that's already taken. As always review.

Harry walked out of his personal bathroom and into his bedroom. The hot shower had revived him after the workout he had this morning. Harry quickly got dressed. If he didn't hurry, he would be late for his first class. He was glad that he brought his special trunk. It always was nice to have his own apartment. Longbottom commented on why a supposed Noble Lord would carry around such a ratty looking old trunk. Idiot If he only knew.

While he had endure the inharmonious snoring of his dorm mates, Harry was in his own room with all the comforts that came with it. It was a massive apartment, with it's fully functional muggle technology. Padfoot and him figured out how to bypass the little problem of magic mucking it up. Plus the added affect that, he could use it as an exit point to come and go from Hogwarts without the old coot finding out.

The one thing that they learned, all those years on the run, was how to hide in plain sight. The trunk looked ratty for a reason. The more undesirable it looked, the more it was left alone. He told the pompous ass that it had sentimental value to him. They all seemed to buy it. Well, he didn't know about the one they called Ron. He hadn't met him yet. He didn't sleep in the room last night. According to Dean, he was with a girl that they all called The Lungs.

His trunk was warded, to keep out unwanted visitors. It would become his base of operations while he was here. Or as he christened it The Marauders Den. In the months to come he would slowly recruit students into the Marauders. It was the main reason he wanted to spend time in all the houses. This school needed to be united and it sure as hell wasn't going to happen while Dumbledore was running the show. The man was too set in the old ways.

The next generation of Marauders would walk the school again. Unlike his father's crew, his would be larger in number and would hold to the ideas of all four of the founders of Hogwarts, not just one. They would not only learn how to fight, but to out think, out maneuver and out class their enemies in every way. He would have his fighters, healers, spy's, and politicians. They wouldn't just fight in just the battlefields, but in all the arena's. The last time the war ended, nothing changed and that led to the war that they are in now. Things needed to change and change they will.

In the last sixteen years, his mum and godfather had made alliances and earned the favor of both light and dark Witches and Wizards in every country. They could be called upon at a moments notice. They however, were Sirius's and his mum's Marauders. Though he was a member and loved them all dearly, he wanted something of his own. Ever since that night he followed Tonks, his eyes were truly opened that night. It wasn't just about avenging his dad anymore. Innocents were being victimized simply because no one was prepared to get their hands bloody.

Blood...blood, just the thought of it brought back so many memories. She had lost so much blood. It was everywhere. The altar...the grounds...on Tonks...that bitch...his fur, he couldn't get the smell of it out of his fur. Even now he couldn't remember what her natural scent was. Her blood overpowered it. It would be the only way that he could truly identify her.

I jumped into Tonks shadow the moment she turned her back. Did she really think that I would let her go alone? I could smell the fear on her. She didn't think she was coming back. She accepted that and still she went. It was one of the things that made Nimpy so hard to get over.

It was so damn easy to fall in love with her. It had nothing to do with that killer bod of hers. That didn't hurt though. No, she was selfless, caring, and totally understanding when a scrawny kid with glasses and acne follows her around like a puppy. Apparently, according to my godfather, I drooled a lot more than one. Okay, maybe she took a little too much pleasure in making me blush like a tomato. It toughened me up. I suppose I'll always want her on some level, but I'll deal with it. I guess that was why Padfoot dragged me to the Succubus Colony. A week there will certainly clear up your complexion, as well as your attitude towards unrequited love.

Now, one of the benefits of being a animagus is that you gain some of the traits of your form. In my case it was speed, agility, a heightened sense's and the fact that I never need to wear those ugly glasses ever again. I don't care if my mom thinks it makes me look distinguished...they're freekin ugly. The best birth control an the freekin planet, I shit you not.

I still can't believe that my Animagus form is a Shadow Panther. A magical freekin creature. Shadow teleportation is so wicked. Not that I'm bragging...okay I'm totally bragging.

Now, a few thing can happen when your mom go off and helps out a sick friend and leaves you alone with your godfather. One is that she's not around to tell you to eat properly. Two, to make sure you go to sleep at a decent hour and Three, to never, never, never, under any circumstances listen to Padfoot when he says that he's got a brilliant idea.

"Hey pup I got a brilliant idea." What did I tell you. "Since your mum's gone." That should have been my first warning. "Why don't you stay in you panther form for a month to truly become one with the creature?" Now that sounds simple enough when he says it like that. He left the part out about him going off and sniffing some butts, breaking some hearts and going to run with uncle Moony the next full moon. He might have mentioned something about convincing him to pull his head out his arse. I'm not really sure.

Now, what happens when a sixteen year old that is in the form of a shadow panther does when he's not properly supervised? Pay attention class, this is were it gets interesting. He learns that he has a hybrid form of a shadow panther. It's kind of like a werewolf, but I can do some wandless magic. I'm not really sure how that's works yet. I'm not about to look a gift horse in the mouth. I'm sure my mom will figure it out, she's good at that kind of stuff. That it...after she's done freaking out, or gets tired of hexing Padfoots bits.

I never really tested the limits of what each form could do before. Tonight, I put them to the test. I waited until Tonks breaches the wards around the old Manor before I jump out of her shadow. I was so quiet that she didn't even knew I was there. She has this intense look on her face as she surveyed the grounds and planed out how she's going to get in and out.

I'm picking up a lot of scents in there. If she's discovered, it will be a running fight to get out. I half expected the scents to be evil in nature. That would have made this easy. There would be no moral compromise in taking them out permanently then. Don't get me wrong, they were foul... just not evil. They were still someones brother or sister, someones son or daughter. Did I have the right to end that just because they were on the other side?

How many times did I hear his mom and Padfoot debate that point till all hours of the night. It always ended the same. Sirius would tell her to ask James that question. She would hex his bits then go in her room and cry. When he could stand upright again, I'd kick him in the boys because he made her cry. It really is a wonder that they work at all. Anyway, the next day they would apologize and forgive each other. It was a weird cycle, but I got the message clear enough. It wasn't about right or wrong, it was about live or die. Morality had no business on the battlefield.

Tonks heart was beating really fast and I smelled her fear. I knew she would push it aside and do what was needed. It was in her nature. I'm standing beside her and she still hasn't shown any signs that she knows I'm there. She's knelled down beside a bush so she wouldn't be seen. I lick her face so she knows I'm here. She damn near jumps out of her skin when I do. Any other time I would laugh at that. But right now, being quiet was a matter of life and death.

"What the bloody hell are you doing here?" She hissed as soon as she recovered her composure. I swatted her butt with my tail and hope understands.

"The hell you are." I nod my head at her and she narrows her eyes to a thin slit.

"No your not." I show her my fangs

"Don't you take that tone with me." I pounce on her and growl. Only my mom gets away with that. I have her arms pinned under my paws. I love being a panther.

"Okay, so maybe you can take that tone with me." I like her cheek.

"That's really gross by the way." That earned her another lick. I'll probably pay for that at sometime, but what the hell, it was fun.

"All right, all right, all right. You can come with me." I get off her and prance around. She shakes her head and rolls her eyes.

"Just remember, if your mum kills me. I'm gonna come back and haunt you." She said pointing her wand at me. I give her another nod and she rolls her eyes again.

"Okay, as far as I can see there are at least ten guards patrolling the grounds. I need them on the other side of the Manor, when we make are way out. If were not here in twenty minutes, get your arse on the other side of those wards. Don't give me that look. You follow my orders." She stares me down till I nod. I think mom taught her how to do that. It's really creepy.

"Give me five minutes to get inside. I'll probably be looking like my insane aunt coming out, so don't bite me." I give her a good sniff to lock in her scent. I really didn't need to. I just like messing with her.

"In five minutes, I'm gonna need a big distraction. A big one. Well, I guess this is it. Thank you for following me. If we live through this I just might give you that shag." My jaw drops. She turns into a fox and winks at me, before she runs off. Freekin Tease.

This was it, my first real mission. Me and Padfoot had gone hunting plenty of times, but this was different. I've been wanting for this for so long. So why do I feel scared all of a sudden? What if I screw this up and get Tonks killed? My hearts beating twice as fast as hers was just moments ago. Yet there is anticipation of whats to come. These were the bastards that took my father from me. Did I have it in me to do what must be done? Oh well, only one way to find out.

It takes me an all of thirty seconds to make it to my first target. I was so quiet that I'm standing right behind him and he doesn't have a clue I'm there. I'm hesitating. Why am I hesitating? It was then that he turned. He was only a few years older than me. We look at each other for a second before instinct kicks in. He points his wand and I pounce.

I put my full weight on his chest and hear it crack. He tries to scream but nothing comes out. I see the fear in his eyes. He knows it

over...we both do. But did I have the right? Then I remember the last time I saw my father. One eye swollen shut, half his head covered in blood, holding his guts in one hand as he pushes my mom into my crib and turns it into a portkey, just as the killing curse hits him in the back.

FUCK THEM! Mercy was something I wouldn't show them tonight and I vowed to never hesitate again. My claws rip open his jugular and I move on to the next. The full moon shines down on the grounds. There are plenty of shadows and I make full use of them. By the time I have to make the distraction five more are dead.

I see Tonks by a door, in the shadows. I roar as loud as I can, and wait for them. A minute later the door burst open and bootlickers come out of the woodwork. A woman in black with the most foul scent I have ever smelled starts barking orders. I jump into the light and roar again. Spells fly at me, but I'm in the shadows before they even get close. I see Tonks transform into the woman and sneak inside.

For the next ten minutes I lead them on a game of cat and mouse. The idiots actually thought they were the cat. Little by little I start thinned the herd. I used their own shadows against them. My hit and runs were quite effective. The jugular was my primary target. I could come out of a shadow attack and be back into another shadow before they hit the ground.

Somewhere along the way I lost sight of that bitch in black. Only a few of them were left. They must have figured out my little secret, because they were clumped together. It was then when I heard the spells being fired from the other side of the Manor. SHIT! I took off in a flash, Tonks needed me.

I rounded the corner and what I saw will forever be burned into my mind. Two hundred yards of open grounds without any shadows laid between me and her, or should I say...them. Tonks was a firing off spell after spell over her shoulder, while she dragged what looked to be a half-conscious robed person.

I took off in a full sprint out in the open, praying that I to get to them in time. It was then that the blood covered robe opened and the hood fell back. A girl with white hair fired off a spell that was easily deflected. She could have passed for a ghost if it wasn't for all the

blood running out her body. She was naked under the robe and covered with cuts. Some had strange designs in them. The fact that she could muster her magic at all was beyond me. She was defiantly a fighter.

Several bootlickers were throwing curses at them as, they made their way the the boundary of the wards. The bitch in black was leading the pack. She hit Tonks with a cutting curse across her leg and she went down. The girl landed on top of her. I had only managed to make half the distance to them.

I needed to buy them sometime, so I roared. It did the trick. They must have figured that the others were down and no longer a threat, because most of them turned their attention to me. All but the bitch. She had her eyes on the prize.

I ran through a gauntlet of curses. Only my quick panther reflexes kept me from getting hit. Trust me...they got close. Tonks fired a spell at the woman and she was knocked on her ass. I heard her yell at the girl to run, but she wouldn't leave Tonks. They were almost on their feet again when they were hit with another curse. Tonks at the last second twisted so that she took the blunt of the hit. Both fell in different directions.

"Did you really think you could escape girl?" The bitch taunted the girl as she closed the distance between them. She had her wand leveled on the poor girl and there was still to much distance between us.

"Leave her alone you fucking psycho!" Tonks had managed to get on her hands and knees. She was shaky at best.

"Get use to that position slut! My men will put you to good use. I' think, I'll sent pictures to Andy as Christmas cards." Like hell she will!

That was when fate lent me a hand or maybe it was just dumb luck. Don't really care at this point. A cloud cut across the moon and left a shadow for me to use. And did I ever. I came out of Tonks's shadow, leaped over the girl, and landed right in front of the psycho. I roared at her. I wish I could say that I saw her pee, but I definitely smelled it.

She recovered quickly though. I guess that was why she was the boss. She knew how to put her fear aside. I recoiled and readied to pounce, as she leveled her wand at me.

"FUCK YOU CUNT!" A spell whizzed past my ear and hit her square in the face. Boogers erupted out of her nose and formed bat wings. They then attacked her...now, that was freekin priceless. The bitch screams like a banshee.

I looked over my shoulder and see the girl eyes are barely open, but she has a satisfied smile on her face. She gives me a look like she didn't know what to think of me. I lick her across the face to let her know I'm her friend. I expected her to react like Tonks, but she didn't. She wrapped her arms around my neck and hugged me. I gave her another lick and she giggled.

"Shadow!" I look over at Tonks confused.

"That's right, from now on your Shadow." I give her a nod and she continues. "Get her to the portkey." I growl at her. I know what she's getting at, but she doesn't back down.

"NOW! That's an order!" Now I never shadow teleported with someone with me before, but it wasn't like I had a lot of options. We go into Tonks's shadow and come out by the exit point. We make it to the portkey in no time.

"T-thank you." Her voice is raspy, but her intent was sweet. I give her another lick and find it surprisingly nice that she doesn't freak out about it.

"I'll be fine. Go help Tonks." Like I have to be told twice. I go back though the wards and smell the foul stench of werewolves. This is bad, very, very bad. I round the bush that Tonks was hiding behind earlier and see her limping her way to the boundaries. She gets hit in the back by another cutting curse and screams as she goes down.

"Rip that little bitch into pieces!" That sadistic bitch yells. Two werewolves that were flanking her charge after Tonks. How in the fuck is she controlling werewolves? I charge after her. I have to get to Tonks. Now a different kind of fear is coursing through me. I won't hesitate this time. I'm not losing Tonks! She's was crawling with her arms when she saw me coming. Her legs aren't working.

"NO! GET OUT OF HERE PUP! LEAVE ME!" No way in hell is that going to happen. There is also no way in hell I'll be able to get us to the portkey with two werewolves bearing down on us. There is only so much my shadow panther form can do. It's time to up the ante.

I leap over Tonks and go for the werewolves. I transform into my hybrid form. Just picture a werepanther with a tail, if there was such a thing and...well, you get the point. Now, the muggles say the only way to kill a werewolf is with silver. That shows total lack of imagination.

Luckily, I'm bigger than the both of them. I grab them both by the throats and lift them off the ground. Did I mention that my hybrid form is really freekin strong. I guess they aren't used to would be victims fighting back. I slam their heads together and then into the ground. They yipped like bitches, and Sirius said wrestling was rubbish. These two would disagree.

Don't get me wrong, the fuckers got back up, but at least they were more interested in me than Tonks. I wish I could say the same for that psycho bitch of an aunt of hers. While I was going toe to toe with these two she went after Tonks.

The advantage of being a hybrid over a werewolf is that they go on instinct and I don't. My claws are sharper than theirs and I know where to hit. I had to dance with them for awhile but a few severed arteries will do wonders. The down side...they heal quick. That is unless you literally beat one werewolf to death with the other one. Of course if all else fails...rip out their hearts. I know, a little gross, but very effective.

Unfortunately, while I was dealing with Ick and Ook over here, the remaining bootlickers had surrounded Tonks and were taking turns cursing her. I saw that bitch point her wand at Tonks. Then she looked up at me and smiled. I knew she was going to kill her and she knew I could never get to Tonks in time.

My mom taught me a spell once. It was an old one that was passed down from Potter to Potter. It was how my dad was able to get in front of us in time. It was basically a spell of last resort. It would open a small dimensional portal so you could escape. The range was less than seven miles so it wasn't used as a means of primary

travel. I have been practicing with it to see if it had other applications. I just hoped it worked with that hole in the ward.

I reached out with my magic, just as she cast her killing curse. The ground under Tonks rippled like water and she sank through it. With any luck she would come out by the portkey. To my horror, the curse went through the portal as well.

I don't know if it was that or that bitches laughing that sent me over the edge. All that I did know was the panther in me got out. I ripped into those bastards with a bloodlust that would put a vampire to shame. Fang, claw and magic was unmercifully unleashed. I ripped out one of their throats. Guttled another three. Broke two backs and I think I took one of their heads. One by one they fell, until only that bitch was left. Her wand arm was broken in several places and she dangled helplessly as I held her throat in my claw.

Again, that night I smelled werewolf. This time it was different. Then, the howl came and it sent a chill down my spine. I look over my shoulder and see a big werewolf...a really big freekin werewolf. My uncle Moony described him to me once. There wasn't a doubt in my mind that I was looking at Greyback.

"Come to play have we boy?" He growled and I understood him perfectly.

"Come to kill." I growled back and prayed that he didn't smell any fear on me. I knew I couldn't take him. I'm pretty sure he knew it too.

"The dark lord is fond of that one. He will reward me if I save her life."

"You not that fast." I draw blood from her neck to make my point.

"Nor are you." From behind him, he pulls out the white haired girl. Her eyes are closed, but I hear a small moan escape from her. I growl and the noise he makes. I can only guess is a werewolf laugh.

"Did you bite her."

"Not yet. So ripe and fresh...it's hard to resist." I sense he's not lying. Don't ask me how, because I don't really know. I just do.

"A trade?"

"You think?" I hate smart-ass werewolves. I don't have the luxury of time, the wards around this place are going to seal any second. We play a game of toss the hostage. While a catch her, he just lets the bitch land at his feet. Must be her sweet bubbly personality that gets her that kind of devotion. I really don't care, a shadow later we're outside the wards. I can't find the portkey or Tonks. I pray she's safe and alive. I make a portkey and were gone.

I carry her back to our safe house. She's looks so small and pale. I know she's beyond any help that I can give her. I have to get a message to mom. How does she still has blood? Her blood that is in my fur is so overpowering. It distorts my senses. I'm so tired. I knew I pushed myself to the limit tonight. Every step feels like it's the last I have in me to make. Somehow, we make it to the front door. My claws are covered in blood and I can't get a grip. No other choice, I have to smash the door in. It will set off the wards we have around this place. I hope the Calvary get here soon...I've got nothing left.

The first thing I see is my mom kneeling over Tonks and she's not moving. Then, it hit's me that my mom has never seen this version of my animagus. So lets recap...werepanther...covered in blood...holding a pale naked girl...covered with cuts. Does my mom freak out a little...Ya think?

Harry is pulled out of his memory by the vibration of the silent wards alarm around Hogwarts going off. His magical watch shows Padfoots face.

"Pup, Sector 5! Your closer than me!"

"I'm on it!" Harry yells as he climbs out of his trunk. The common room should be empty so he leaps off the top of the stairs and transforms into Shadow before he hits the floor. He never saw Emma on the girls balcony. He most certainty, didn't see the look on her face, just before she fainted.

A/N: Happy Birthday R.G. This ones for you. It's a little on the fluff side and I'm done with the flashbacks for awhile. The characters are developed enough so that the story can kick into high gear. I hope you like it. As always, I love reviews.

Dilys had told Ginny of a secret exit out of Hogwarts that was only known and passed down from Headmaster to Headmaster. She checked the Marauders Map and sure enough it wasn't marked. Thanks to Fred and George she was able to fake a nose bleed the moment she got to the Great Hall. Professor McGonagall insisted she go directly to the hospital wing. It was almost too easy. If the uncommon luck she was having today held, she could get to Gingotts and back before lunch. None would be the wiser and with enough gold that Dumbledore couldn't hold her scholarship over her head. One more step closer to her true independence.

She had no intention of being greedy with what was in Dilys's Vault. She planned to give her brothers the startup capital to start their Joke Shop. They had always been there for her and it was the least that she could do. She had no intention of letting her mother know about her new found wealth. Well, not until she was of age and there was nothing the woman could do about it. She was expecting her mum to blow her top, when the woman hears that she was ditching Neville. Her dream of Ginny being the next Lady Longbottom wasn't going to happen. Never! Never! Never! Never...ever!

She slipped behind an old tapestry on the third floor and quickly raced down the long hallway. After a few minutes she came to an old dusty door. She guessed that it hadn't been used in years, maybe even centuries. She raised her wand and cast an Alohomora.

No sooner than her spell left her wand, than the hallway filled with a blinding light. She covered her eyes with her hands on instinct. Even with the added cover the light was way too intense to open her eyes. Her ankles then snapped together and she was hoisted upside down in the air. Her skirt and robes started to wrap around her body tightly. Somewhere along the way she lost her grip on her wand and it was lost somewhere in the folds of her clothes. Panic set in and she started too struggled desperately against her binding garments. The more she struggled, the tighter it got. The hood of her robes engulfed her head. She felt as if it was trying to swallow her. She

shook her head wildly back and forth to free herself from it. Like the rest of her body, her head was bound tightly. Only her mouth and lower jaw was left exposed. I'm dead...I'm so dead.

If it wasn't for the fact that she was now tightly wrapped up like a mummy, she would have been impressed by the clever trap. Now, she was just good and pissed. Mostly she was scared, it was only a matter of time until she was found and she was dead. Well, not dead, but just as good as. Dumbledore would go and change her into whatever it was that Neville wanted. The hell with that!

She could feel her wand against the small of her back. If she could get to it and then use the counter-curse. Who was she kidding, she had no idea what curse she was trapped in. Like that, had ever stopped her before. If it was one thing that the twins had taught her, it was that nothing is impossible with enough nerve. That she had in spades. The alternative was...unacceptable.

She tried small movements and found that there was no reaction from her cloths. Inch by bloody inch, her hand moved closer to her wand. She was almost there. Just a little farther, she could feel it with the tip of her finger. She pushed harder and got it between the tips of two fingers. She tried to pull it in, but it was stuck tight. It was then that she heard foot falls. They were distant at first, but were getting closer by the second. She wasn't going down like this without a fight. A steady flow of swear words escaped from her mouth as she tried desperately to get a grip on her wand.

Harry was leaning up against a wall and watching the show with some amusement. In his panther form he was able to quickly and quietly sneak up on her. The castle was so full of shadows that he was able to get here without even coming close to being seen. He knew he had a few minutes before Padfoot and the others would get here. Whoever was trying to get out of the school had got caught in his trap. He and his godfather had developed wards the not only repelled, but attacked as well. And in the case of today...capture.

It was quite a view, the girl was upside down. Her clothing was wrapped tightly around her body. So tightly, that there was little room for movement. The mummification jinx had worked perfectly. The old dog was the only one he had ever seen tries to get out of this jinx. Thank Merlin his mum had the good sense to never let them practice these traps on her. That would have been a little

awkward. For every curve of the girl's body seemed to be emphasized. So much that he was finding it hard to focus on anything else. He shook his head to clear it.

His eyes were drawn back to her shapely body. She had a really very attractive butt. He really liked the way it wiggled every time she struggled to get free. She was persistent if nothing else. He felt slightly disgusted with himself, because he was perving big time and he knew it.

Just as he knew who she was now. The dust that had been kicked up from her passage through the unused hallway had made it difficult to ID her. She didn't have the foul stench of one of his followers. On the contrary, her sent was very appealing, almost additively so. He had locked in and filed away her scent last night. Though, last night he was certain that her scent seemed familiar somehow.

She had almost gotten to her wand. He was impressed that she was keeping a level head. He decided it was time to add some presser and cast a spell to make the sound of feet walking towards her. Her head jerked when she heard the sound echoing down the long hallway. Then he heard the impressive flow of mumbled swearing. She was a lot more fun to watch get out of this than the old dog, that was for sure. You just might make a Marauder yet.

Noting the time, he decided that enough was enough. Harry started to cast the counter-curse when Ginny yelled "Got ya!" She cast a Liberacorbis and dropped on the floor with an unceremonious thud.

"Ouch! Maybe I should have waited to do that. Think Weasley think! There has to be a way out of this?" She thought about it and knew that she would have to find a way around the curse. It had accrued to her that the curse was affecting her cloths not her. All she had to do was eliminate the problem. That brought around problem number two." Oh screw it! It's not like anyone is there right now."

"I swear if I ever get my wand on the sick son of a bitch who thought this up." Ginny cast a banishing spell and her cloths disappeared completely. It wasn't the first time that Harry had seen a naked girl. But they were usually in a much friendlier moon when it had accrued. He was fairly sure he was going to be hexed before this was over. In truth, he couldn't blame her. Maybe in a few years they would laugh

about this. Oh, who was he kidding, he was a dead man and he knew it.

"Whatcha doin?" Did I actually just say that? Harry hopped a little levity would lessen the awkward moment. Stupid yes, but it was worth a shot. Ginny's head shot up and her eyes looked as if they would pop out of her head at any second. On instinct she jumped to her feet. Then it accrued to her that she should have stayed crouched down on the floor. She stood there in shock for a second, before she had the good sense to cover up what she was able to cover up. In Harry's defense, he did manage to keep eye contact with her, well mostly. He was a guy after all.

"What's it look like I'm doing you bloody git! You want to turn around?"

"And turn my back on a naked, pissed off witch...not freekin likely."

"What do you think you're doing?" Ginny yelled as Harry took of his robe. He looked confused for a second and then handed it to her. "Oh so now you're going to be a gentleman?"

"Well if you don't want it?" Harry asked as he pulled back his robe.

"Don't be an arse!" Ginny quickly snatched it out of his hand, with a look that could kill. She used it to cover herself more effectively, as she waited for him to turn around. When he showed no signs that he intended to. She turned her back to him in a huff.

"You know, I had a dream about this very thing last night. And here you were all wrapped up in a bow for me. This really is a magical school." Her eyes grew huge and then narrowed to a thin slit. She mumbled something out that wasn't very friendly.

"You know, you have nothing to be embarrassed about." I should really stop now.

"I am annoyed...not embarrassed!" Git thinks he knows everything.

"Your cheeks have a rosy tint to them...very cute." Ginny spun around and got toe to toe with Harry. Her hands were on her hips with a primal look in her eyes.

"No...they...don't." She growled through clenched teeth. Harry leaned down and got nose to nose with her.

"Those weren't the one I was talking about." He teased her in hopes that she would find the humor in the situation.

"Oh the shite I have to put up with!" She started to pace back and forth as she mumbled something to herself. She was doing it so fast, that he couldn't follow her. He decided it was probably for the best.

Ginny took a long breath and decided to calm down. Harry wasn't the one that made her cloths disappear. That was her doing, and he did offer his robe to her. Okay, he may was taking the Mickey out of her, but wouldn't she have done the same if the situation was reversed. "Can we just get out of here?"

"First tell me why you were trying to sneak off grounds?"

"It's none of your damn business Potter!" Her Weasley temper was back and in full swing, as she turned to face him again. He glared back at her for a few seconds and she felt what her brothers did when the roles were reversed.

"Well Weasley, you can explain it to the professors when they get here. By the sound of it, you got about a minute." Harry's words had coldness in them that sent a chill down her spine. He turned to leave. There wasn't anywhere else to go. This way was locked and she could hear that they were no longer alone in the hall.

"Please don't go! I'm sorry...I just can't tell you." Ginny pleaded with him and was surprised how needy she sounded. She was sounding like a victim again. She would never be one of those again. More importantly, she didn't want him to see her as one. Harry stopped, but didn't turn back around.

"Can't or won't?"

"Please...they'll be coming soon. I have to get out of here." Harry turned around and they stared into each other's eyes. Harry saw her silently pleading desperately at him to help her. Ginny saw the internal struggle waging in his mind. She was asking him to blindly trust her. The same trust she didn't give him last night.

The moment was broken when they heard the sound of running feet getting closer. They both looked down the dark hall. By the sound there were more than one person coming too. Harry turned his head back at her and said. "We need to work on our trust." With that he cast his spell.

Sirius was the first to get there, followed closely by Lily, then Snape and bringing up the rear was Dumbledore. The old dog sniffed and narrowed his eyes at Harry. Well, this should be interesting.

"Sorry for all the trouble. It looks like this little pussy set off the wards." In Harry's hand was the transfigured form of Ginny, as a red cat. She hissed at him for the comment and scratched at his hand in an attempt to break free. Harry held her tight.

"Perhaps it's an Animagus in disguise." Snape sneered as he leveled his wand to Ginny. Harry instinctively put himself between her and his wand. Ginny stopped struggling. She knew that he wouldn't let anything happen to her. He might be a git, but he wasn't a prat.

"I would smell it if she wasn't a cat." Sirius said as he grabbed Snape's wrist and directed his wand away from Harry. Lily then got in Snape's face. He felt the tip of a wand in his nether region.

"Never point a wand at my son." Her words were low and layered with venom. For a brief second there was a look of hurt in his eyes, before his usual mask of disinterest was back. He took a step back and bowed his head to her.

"My apologies Lil...Mrs. Potter. The boy was not the intended target." The distaste of calling her Mrs. Potter was oblivious to everyone. Dumbledore decided it was time to play peacemaker, before things escalated. .

"Well, no harm done. I must say that you have some very interesting wards Professor Black."

"Not mine. This one was the pups."

"Really? That's very interesting." Harry saw the wheels in the old man's mind turning and didn't like it one little bit. That didn't mean

that he wouldn't use it to advantage if the opportunity presented itself.

"Yeah, you pick up a few tricks when you grow up living on the run." Harry's voice was laced with sarcasm and a high level of contempt. Ginny's head snapped up at that. The more time she spent around him the more questions came to mind.

"Oh...I see." Whether his comment was directed at Snape or himself Dumbledore wasn't sure.

"Don't worry, I'll adjust it so that no one else gets caught in it."

"See that you do pup." Sirius answered with a look that told him that he would follow his lead. His mum gave a look that told him to tread carefully, but that she would back him up if it came to that.

"It will only take a few minutes to reset the wards. Then I'll make sure this little one gets back to her Master." Again, Ginny hissed at him for the cheek.

"That's a fiery one pup. She just might get the best of you."

"Oh please." Harry boasted and winced when he got nipped by Ginny. He sent a warning look at her and she stuck out her tongue at him. Try as he might, he couldn't help but smile a little. Fiery little thing indeed

"Perhaps you should try compassion and understanding, with a little respect son." Lily added. Harry got the message and nodded.

"What are you two rambling on about? It's just a stupid cat."

"That's not the point you wanker. It's not one of your precious potions...it's a living thing."

"This is a pointless conversation. If I'm not needed Headmaster? I have a class to teach." Snape stormed off before Dumbledore could even answer him. Lily rolled her eyes and Sirius snickered. Pissy little bugger, ain't he?

"Ah, well...I say we leave young Harry to it. Shall we?" Albus gestured for the other to follow him.

"Oh Headmaster, It seems that I forgot some much needed supply's for some of my classes. I'm going to need to go the Diagon Alley."

"I don't perceive a problem with that. It is the first day of class after all." He had read the Daily Prophet and knew the boy could take care of himself. As a Noble Lord, he really couldn't refuse him. After what happened the night before, he thought it would be wise to try and befriend him. This was simply the first play of the game. He could afford to be generous. Especially, if he was going to get him to join the Order.

"I'm not all that familiar with the place. Would you mind if I borrowed one of your Prefects to guide me. It would speed things along." Harry kept his voice casual, as if it was an afterthought. Showing no signs that he was manipulating the master. Ginny purred and licked his hand in appreciation. Lily sniffed and then cocked her brow. So we meet again? She looked hard at the cat in her son's hand. Ginny recoiled under the scrutiny. Oh shite! His mum knows. Lily softened her eyes and she relaxed a little. Lily then smiled and winked at her. Ginny winked back grateful for the woman's trust. Why does she seem so familiar to me?

"Good idea pup. You tend to get distracted when you're left to your devices." Sirius chuckled out, that earned him an evil look by Harry.

"Don't look at Padfoot like that young man. He has a very good point. We wouldn't want you getting sidetracked and end up in a Succubus Colony." Lily finished with a cold stare. Ginny snapped her head at Sirius. Did she just call him Padfoot? Wait, what was that about a Succubus Colony?

"Never going to let me live that down are you?"

"Nope and don't you roll your eyes at me."

"This is the kind of shit I have to put up with." Harry mumbled so that only Ginny could hear him. She purred happily, she was really starting to like his mum.

"What was that dear?" Lily asked in an amused but warning manner.

"Nothing...just clearing my throat mum." How does she freekin do that?

"Yes, that is a good idea. I will allow it and notify the other Professors." Dumbledore answered, doing his best to get the conversation back on track. The three of them had a way of talking around things that he found very vexing.

As they walked off Sirius whispered to Lily. "That was her, wasn't it?"

"Yes, I believe she is."

"Boy doesn't have a clue does he?"

"Her blood wouldn't come out of his fur. That's the scent he identified as hers."

"Rookie mistake."

"Do you have a hybrid form?"

"Touché', a galleon say's she figures it out before he does."

"You would bet against you own godson?"

"In a heartbeat."

"You're on."

Harry waited until they were back in the Marauders Den, before he turned Ginny back. She just stared at him with a mixture of shock, amazement and admiration. Then she took in her surroundings and her amazement grew tenfold. The place was amazing. To think, it all fit inside a ratty old trunk. But she bet it was disillusioned to look that way. Harry was just full of surprises.

"Smooth Potter...very smooth. For a second there I thought you were going to rat me out." You're still going to pay for that pussy comment.

"Not my style, besides I hate rats." Harry walked into the kitchen. Ginny followed him in. There was something in the way he said rats that sent off an alarm in her head.

"You played him well." Ginny commented as she looked at all the muggle appliances in the room. Her dad would have had kittens if he saw this place.

"Yeah, the old fart never saw it coming. I'll have to thank Sirius and my Mum for the assist." Harry said as he reached inside the fridge.

"You're calling her Mum now. You were calling her Mom last night." She wanted to keep the conversation light for as long as possible. She knew he was going to ask her all sorts of questions, she wasn't sure she was ready to answer. She knew she owed him some though. He really saved her bum back there. But how did he know she needed to go to Diagon Alley?

"Yeah...well, it seems to mean a lot to her." Harry played it off like it was a bother, but Ginny didn't buy it for a second. She chose to let it slide for now. There was no real rush after all. She was going to enjoy unraveling the mystery that was Harry Potter.

"Cool, the way they backed you up though. You usually don't get that from parents." Harry pulled two bottles out of the fridge and tossed one to her. She winced, it was ice cold. It was made of plastic and the label said. Dr Pepper She looked at it cautiously. It was cold, but the name suggested it was hot. It would probably burn when it went down her throat like fire whiskey.

"They trust my judgment...well, most the time anyway."

Ginny knew what he was referring to and found that she didn't like the idea that he had been with a Succubus. She wanted to ask him about it, but figured it wasn't really any of her business. Not yet anyway. Harry could tell she was struggling not to ask him and was grateful for that. Why did his mum have to go and bring that up? A change of subject was needed.

"Try it, it's really good."

"You first." She asked at him wearily, but she had a playful smile on her face, when she said it.

"Chicken?" Harry challenged. Ginny cocked her head to the side and raised her eye brows. Does he really think that is going to work?

"Do I look stupid to you? Don't answer that!" She warned him, with a pointed finger. Harry clucked at her and then opened his bottle and chugged it. He looked at her with that cocky grin of his for about a full two seconds, before his upper body shivered.

"Not so tough are you Potter?" Ginny laughed at him.

"Think you could do better Darlin'?" Harry egged her on and she smiled at the challenge.

"Oh please, you wouldn't last two minutes in my house. The twins would eat you for breakfast." Ginny said as she rolled her eyes and then took a large gulp. She expected it to burn on the way down. It did the complete opposite. It was cold and sweet and had a bubbling sensation as it went down her throat. "See, that wasn't so- WHOA!" Ginny yelled as her whole body shivered.

"Told ya." He shot at her with a grin that was ear to ear.

"Git" She fired back at him and then took another drink. The sensation wasn't as intense, but still bloody good.

"I'm glad I was able to give you your first Pep-gasm."

"My first Pep-what?"

"You know, pepper...orgasm...pep-gasm. Oh, screw it. It's not as funny if I have to explain it."

"Well, I've never had one of those, so I wouldn't know." Oh Shite! Did that just come out my mouth? Ginny's eyes bugged out as she felt heat spread across her cheeks. Harry cocked a brow. Oh great, he going to be like a dog with a bone now.

"Really? We'll have to remedy that." I am so getting my bits hexed.

"Is that why you brought me here Mr. Potter?" Two can play this game. Ginny leaned back against the counter in a come-hither fashion. Harry's robe fell open enough so that one of her shoulders was left bare. It became painfully aware to Harry that she was still naked under his robe. The panther in him woke up and took notice.

Ginny gulped when she saw the predatory gleam in his eyes. She thought she had taken it too far. But as quickly as it came, it was gone and his usual playful eyes were back. She then realized that it wasn't fear that made her swallow hard...it was excitement. Neville never made her feel this way. She never wanted to be snogged so badly in her life.

"Tease" Harry said as he lifted her up onto the counter. He breathed her in and it was like panther nip. He couldn't help, but let out a small growl.

"Git" Ginny whispered into his ear as she ran her fingers through his unkempt hair.

"You were amazing by the way. Sirius never was able to escape that before." Why am I still talking?

"Yeah...well, desperate times call for desperate measures. I figured it was my cloths that were cursed and not me." Just shut up and snog me! Harry's robe slid down over her other shoulder and her pulse point called out to him.

"Sometimes it's the simple spells that work the best." Does she even know what she's doing to me? Ginny unbuttoned his shirt and ran her hand across his chest.

"By the way git, just how long were you watching me." Did he just purr? Merlin! He gets me hot!

"Long enough to see that you have a very nice wiggle tease." Ginny buried her face into Harry's chest and laughed. The way he was running his hands through her hair felt like heaven. She looked up at him and saw the predator in his eyes again.

"You all done talking now?"

"Oh, hell yeah!" He claiming her lips in a hungry kiss. She met his hunger with one of her own, as they lost themselves in each other.

A/N: Sorry it took me so long to update. I had a lot of personal stuff going on and it was hard to find the time. Thanks for all the reviews. I'm glad you liked it. Please let me know what you think.

Remus Lupin was having a very good day. He started his day off with the most mind-blowing dirty sex of his life. His wife of six months had just found out she was pregnant. Apparently, pregnancy brought out her more kinky side. Not that he was complaining. He planned on riding that wave for as long as he could. With a most Harry-like grin plastered on his face, he surveyed his new office.

As Liaison to both Lord Black and Potter, He was given two offices to choose from. All Noble Lords have an office within the Ministry of Magic. Lupin chose to occupy Charles Potter's old office. The man had always treated him like a son, regardless of his hairy little problem. He even went so far as to offer him a job right out of Hogwarts, in this very office no less. Remus was young and let his pride get the better of him. He was determined to make it on his own and refused to be a charity case.

Charles wanted him because he saw the potential he had. He was also a realist. He knew that with even an internship with a Noble House Remus would have more doors open to him than even some pureblooded wizards would have. He was well respected and many other Lords would always follow his lead in all things. It was one of the reasons that Voldemort had him and his wife killed. It sent a message to all the other Lords that he was a force to be feared.

One Lord in particular read the writing on the wall sooner than most. Orion Black saw through the speeches and lies that were spewed by Voldemort. He and Charles were often on different sides of most issues. He respected and admired his childhood friend. Charles was a Gryffindor and by nature bold. He was a Slytherin so of course he was sneaky. He could smile in his face of a madman while he plotted behind his back. If Voldemort would assassinate a Pureblood Noble Lord, then were any of them truly safe.

He reconnected with his wayward son and set in motion things that he hoped would lead to the man's downfall. Bellatrix was a lost cause; she was corrupted long before he saw the truth. He even went so far as to order his youngest son to join the snake's ranks

and his beautiful niece into a loveless marriage with a vile excuse of a man. Two decisions that haunted him to the day he died.

Regulus did not meet a gentle end, but he did die with honor. His death wasn't in vain; he discovered the bastard's secret to immortality. It was a bitter cold comfort to Orion, who fell into a depression that almost ended his life. In the end, it was Narcissa's words that brought him back. It was to her that he told about the horcrux at Regulus's funeral. She also saw the haunted look in Horace Slughorn eyes. He was about to give his condolences, when he overheard Orion. He made a hasty retreat, but even after Narcissa cornered him in the garden, the man gave nothing away. Hope was not lost for she knew his Achilles heel. It went by the name Lily Potter.

She knew that her cousin Sirius was close to Lily, and she was sure that he could help her. He may not have always got along with Regulus, but he was still his brother. She knew that he would come to Regulus's funeral, and Sirius didn't disappoint him. He came to the family plot, in the cover of night. When he knew everyone would be gone. A huge black dog dropped a single flower on the grave of Regulus Black. He was followed by a great stag. The two stood at the grave of her cousin. The dog lay down next to the grave and started to whimper in grief. The stag settled down next the dog and laid his head over the dog. There they stayed, and she felt like it was wrong to intrude. It was then that she was sure that it was Sirius. That meant that the stag was James Potter. They were brother in all but blood after all.

Even before she relieved herself, they seemed to know that she was there. They both looked at her and after a second nodded so she knew it was alright to come. It was a magnanimous display of trust they showed in her, after all she was married to one of Voldemort's inner circle. She told them about what she knew, as well as what Orion had sat in motion and begged for their help. Two days later she was given a slip of paper with an address on it. When she got there she was met by Lily Potter.

James and Sirius were there, as well as Remus. They had the loveliest sit down. In which she relieved all she knew. James and Sirius were surprised by the news that their fathers were childhood friends. They were even more surprised by the man's actions and the extent that he went to oppose Voldemort. What affected her

most was the compassion and understanding that Lily showed her. They were never friends when they went to school. In fact she was sure that she had never even spoke to her.

Here was a woman she hardly knew and would probably never even consider speaking with on the street. Yet, Lily was shedding tears for the abusive, loveless marriage that she accepted, as a matter of honor and duty. The life of a Black was one of duty, and she was raised to perform that duty without objection. She would have to bare him a male child per the Marriage Contract. She was also protected, by it to never have to take the Dark Mark. What was slipped in the Contract was that if Lucius ever was convicted of a crime that brought shame to the House of Black. He would surrender all Malfoy vaults, properties, and Wizengamot votes. It would be up to Lord Black to deem what is shameful. It was a nice little loophole. Orion Black was nothing, if not shrewd.

When Lily left the room to compose herself, Narcissa told Sirius that she never knew people like Lily even existed. He explained that was one of the reasons that he ran away. James told her that was what was so special about her. She could weep for an enemy as well as a friend. Narcissa followed her into the other room and had the most enlightening talk of her life. In Lily Potter she found the friend that she had waited her whole life for.

Even after Lily got the truth out of Slughorn, they would often spend time together shopping or taking walks in the park. Of course they would always be safely hidden under a glamor charm. They were the go between for the Marauders and Orion. Through pregnancy and child birth, Narcissa saw that the ideas that were shoved down her throat as a child was just a big pile of shite.

Orion secretly financed the hunt for the horcrux's. Remus was out of the country when the damn prophecy was made. He didn't even get to attend James's funeral. Sadly, neither did Lily, Sirius and Harry for that matter. They were already in hiding in France.

"You ready for this Moony...I mean Mr. Lupin?" Narcissa gave him a mocking curtsy under her glamor charm. He was so lost in the past that he didn't sense her come in. She recognized the faraway look in his eyes and signed. "Of all people, I though you would be looking to the future, not the past. You're soon to be a father, are you not?"

"Just remembering how this all got started, that's all. 12 years of my life. I spent looking for those cursed things. Only 3 remain now."

"So you got that damn snake then."

"Killed it...proper."

"Good...it always gave me the creeps."

"I suppose I owe you an explanation." Ginny breathlessly told Harry. They had finally managed to pull themselves apart. By the look in Harry's eyes, it was the last thing he wanted to do. She had to agree with him on that count. He was an amazing kisser. Granted, she had only Neville to compare him to but...Damn. His lips were surprisingly soft and he most defiantly knew how to use them. His tongue was as nimble as a dancer, and he knew just where to put his hands to drive her insane.

Hermione would often go on about how she could snog her brother for hours. She never really got it till now. She guessed she just needed a proper partner. She could definitively get use to this. What surprised her was that he hadn't picked her up and carried her to the bedroom. Truth be told, she wasn't sure if she would object if he did. Her head told her that it was too soon. Plenty of her friends had told her that jumping in bed with a bloke too soon always ruined the relationship. He would see you as a slut and that was all he would want to do with you. She didn't think Harry was that sort of guy. She was fairly sure that his mum raised him better than that. The problem was that every other part of her wanted him to ravage her, and he had that look in his eyes again.

"Um...what?" Harry mumbled into her neck as he made his way down it. Lips, teeth and tongue were working in harmony to drive Ginny crazy. She let out a long slow moan that was the sweetest music to his ears. He started to attack the crook of her neck when she grabbed two handfuls of his wild hair and pulled.

"I can't think straight when you do that." She said, though it mostly came out as a moan.

"Then don't." Harry told her as he moved in for the kill. One hand full of hair kept him in place, while the other gave him a slap to the cheek. Not too hard, just hard enough to clear his head and get his

attention. He shook his head for a second to refocus himself. When he looked at her, she could still see the lust in his eyes, but it was now in check.

"Are you ready to listen now?"

"Not when you're dressed like that. I am just a mortal man after all." Harry said as his eyes ran up and down her body. His robe was barely covering anything up. A smile spread across Ginny's face. She rather liked that she could drive him crazy like that.

"No problem. I'll just streak over to the girl's dorm and put something on." She said as she hopped off the counter. His robes fell open as she did that. Whether it was on purpose or accident, Harry wasn't sure. The only thing stopping him from getting to see Ginny in her full glory was that the robe clung to her breasts. Freekin Tease.

"You're evil...you know that right." To Harry's credit, he was trying his best to keep eye contact with Ginny, but it was torture. This made Ginny smile even brighter, if that was even possible.

"Maybe...just a little." She gave him a wink and put two fingers close together so only a small gap was between them.

"I'm gonna need another cold soda." Harry over emphasized the cols part.

"You're thirsty?" Ginny was surprised by the sudden subject change.

"No. It's for my bits." He grunted at Ginny.

"Oh...sorry about that." She shamelessly giggled out.

"No you're not." Harry teased her as he grabbed her by the hand and lead her out of the kitchen and to a bedroom. She gulped when she saw a king sized bed. Harry ignored it and walked over to the closet and opened the door.

"Merlin! I've seen smaller stores. Where did you get all these clothes? You're not a cross dresser are you?" Ginny said as she walked into the massive closet the walls were covered with racks of clothes. They ranged from very formal, to casual. In the middle was

a bench and full length mirror. The cloths looked as if they had never been worn. Then she saw the collection of shoes, it was to die for.

"This is a guest room, and no I'm not a cross dresser. I'm not above bribing someone to achieve my goals and Aunt Nimpy has a very wide range of taste when it comes to clothes."

"What kind of sick person would name their kid Nymphy?"

"I'm guessing that her mum was a good potion when that happened. I'll just be out here while you pick out an outfit. Then we can talk." Harry opened the door to leave. When he was almost out the door, Ginny asked him. "Not that I'm complaining, but you've already seen me naked. The mystery has already been solved." Harry hung his head for a moment and mumbled something to himself before he answered her. "Because, my self-control has its limits." With that he shut the door.

When Ginny emerged from the closet she was bearing a light blue silk blouse that fit her perfectly. It was unbuttoned enough to show a little cleavage, but not so much that it was all that you looked at. The skirt that she was wearing was just about mid thigh and nicely showed off her shapely legs. She wore black velvet boots that went up to mid calf. She had on Harry's odd looking robe; it was open in the front. Harry was sitting on a couch when she came into the room. By the look on his face Ginny was guessing he liked the way she looked. Damn...she looks sexy and dangerous.

"Why does everything fit like it was made for me?"

"Magic"

"Cool" Ginny noticed that he was looking at a photo, when she came in. She walked over and plopped down beside him on the couch. She leaned over to look at it and Harry took the opportunity to breathe in again. It was very old photo she gathered by the clothes that the two boys were wearing. Both of them were laughing and playing. Both of their hair was black, but one was wild like Harry's and one was long and straight like Professor Black's.

"Is that your dad and godfather?"

"No, they are their dads actually."

"But I heard that Potters were considered light wizards and the Blacks were always dark wizards?"

"When you're playing in the sandbox does any of that shit really matter? How many friendships ended when they came here and were forced into Houses? Until then, did anyone really care about blood status?" Harry made a good point. Aside from Luna, she didn't have any friends that weren't in Gryffindor. Though the DA was made up of people from three of the houses, she didn't really talk to any of them outside of that.

"I see your point."

"So...what are you running from?"

"I don't run from a fight Potter." Ginny snapped at Harry and she instantly regretted it. "Sorry" He really saved her bum earlier today and had every right to ask her.

"Don't be. Never stop being who you really are to please someone else. I pushed and you pushed back. It's one of the things that I like about you...you're fiery."

"Thanks...I think. I'm just use to...never mind, it's not important." Harry saw that it was, but he would respect her privacy for now. She would tell him when and if she was ready. She started to bite her lower lip and Harry could see she was struggling with something. He ran his hand through her hair. It felt like silk between his fingers. Ginny closed her eyes and leaned into it. It had the calming affect that he hoped for and by the look of it; she was enjoying it as much as he was.

"You know that you have about every shade of red that there is in your hair. It's like a wildfire." The intense way he was looking at her hair told her he was being sincere and not using some line on her. What he said touched something deep inside of her. Most people teased her about it, but Harry like it. No, he was entranced by it...by her. He didn't want her to be anything but herself. She hadn't felt this accepted since she was a little girl. Before she picked up that damn dairy and ruined everything.

She knew that she was falling for him in a big way. She thought that she cut that part of her heart off a long time ago. Over the last few years she had build an impenetrable fortress around her heart. But the git walked right past it like it wasn't even there. Or did she just open the door to him willingly. She wasn't sure anymore. All she truly knew at that moment was she wanted to snog him senseless right now. When his eyes met hers, all her reserve went out the widow and she brought her lips crashing down on his. And for the second time that morning they fell into a world all their own.

It was Harry that pulled away. The panther in him wanted out...no, it wanted to mate with her badly. He knew being in a room with a bed in it wasn't a good idea.

"What? What's wrong?" When Harry stood up she got the answer to her question. "Oh"

"Ya think." Harry said over his shoulder as he walked out of the room. She got up and followed him out, but not before she looked back at the comfortable looking bed.

"How did you know that I needed to go to Diagon Alley?"

"I didn't. It was the most plausible lie to get us out of here today."

"Thank you by the way for that. I suppose it's pointless to tell you that you don't have to come with me."

"And how often can you say that you ditched the first day of class."

"And right under the Headmasters nose, no less."

"So sweet it has to be fattening." They both burst out laughing. It was Ginny that was the first to recover. Her face turned very serious. Harry could tell she was finally ready to talk about it. He took a seat in the nearest chair. Ginny started to pace back and forth in an attempt to sort out her thoughts.

"Have you ever made a mistake that changed your life before?" Harry gave her a nod and she continued. "It was my first year. When I think back then, I had my whole life planned out. I was going to marry Neville, have three kids and be ridiculously happy. Stupid I know, but he was different back then, or I was just too blind to see

who he really was. Then again, I was 11 years old, what did I know." Ginny started to pace again. "I-I trusted the wrong person...no, thing. That would be more accurate. Sorry I'm rambling." Harry said nothing. She needed to get this out, for herself if nothing else.

"Like I said I was 11 and entirely too trusting...Bad things happened Harry...really bad things. People got hurt. I hurt people...I almost got someone I consider a sister killed." tears were running down her face and all Harry wanted to do was hold her and take away the pain she was in. He wanted to tell her that everyone makes mistakes. That she was only 11 and she shouldn't be so hard on herself. He would before the day was through, but now she needed to get this out, so he remained silent.

Ginny laid it out for him, every gut wrenching detail. She wasn't sure just when he got up and wrapped her in the most comforting hug she had ever had. She cried into his chest as she told him her darkest moments of that year. He listened silently as he stroked her hair. Occasionally he would give her a little kiss on the top of her head to let her know that it didn't change what he thought of her. It was her biggest fear that he would blame her as much as she blames herself.

"Then he told me I owed Neville this Life Debt. It was pure shite! He was just using it so he could control me! Neville treated me like his own personal toy after that. Like I wasn't even a person and I was stupid enough to believe them." It was Harry that was pacing now, he was fuming mad. His fists were clenched in an eerily quiet rage. It was the kind that made the hairs on the back of your neck stand on end. The pictures on the walls started to rattle and furniture started to move on their own.

"Those dirt bag sack of shits I'm going to shove my boot so far up their asses that-"

"HARRY!" Ginny shouted at him. She did the only thing that she could think of. She wrapped her arms around him tightly from behind. She had his arms were pinned at his sides. Her chest was pressed firmly against his back, and was holding onto him as if their lives depended on it. He felt her trembling against him. It was then that he saw that several things around the room were spinning rapidly in the air and that the walls were shaking. He ran his tongue across his teeth and felt fangs. He felt the prick of the claws that were forming

in his clenched fists. It took a few second for him to get his magic under control. Changing into Shadow right now was probably not the best idea. It wasn't until Ginny felt his body completely relax that she let go of him.

"Sorry about that."

"And people say I have a temper."

"Those bastards are going down!" It wasn't a threat. It was a fore drawn conclusion. It was time for Shadow to stretch his legs once more. For Ginny it was nice to have someone that saw those two for what they really were.

"I love that you want to help, but this is my fight Harry. It's my freedom that we're talking about. I have to be the one to take them down. If I don't...then I'll never be truly free." He understood the wisdom in her words He didn't like it, but he understood it.

"Don't expect me to just stand back and do nothing. Nobody fucks with someone I care about and gets away with it. I'm not built that way!" Harry rounded on her.

"Don't expect me to stand around and be a damsel in distress. Because, I'm done with that! Never again!" Ginny got toe to toe with him. Even with the height difference, She let him know that she wasn't backing down on this. They glared at each other for a full two minutes, before Harry threw his hands up in the air in frustration.

"You gotta give me a bone here Ginny. There has to be something I can do to help." Harry said refusing to look at her.

"I don't want to use you Harry." Ginny softly put her hand on his forearm.

"You're not built that way either and we both know it." His voice was soft as he turned to look at her.

"Okay, there is something that you can do for me. Can you teach me Occlumency?"

"Why? What happened?"

"Funny you should ask."

It was never good to be the bearer of bad news. That was what Markus Flint's mum always told him. His father was a violent man and he had learned his lesson well over the years. Black eyes, broken nose, knocked out teeth, cracked ribs, and the list went on and on. With that in mind, he should have known better than to not look at the headline of the Daily Prophet, before he gave it to the Dark Lord. Markus's father for all his cruelty, was a kitten compared to Lord Voldemort.

He had been under a cruciatus curse for what felt like years. In reality, it was for about three minutes. The whole time, the Dark Lord was ranting on about what he read in the paper. Maybe it was time to rethink this whole Death Eater thing.

"How dare that snot-nosed little brat think to challenge me. Lord Voldemort...the greatest Wizard that ever lived." Voldemort ranted as he tortured the stupid boy that brought him the morning paper. All of the Death Eaters in attendance knew better than to answer that question. They had no desire to trade places with the boy. When no answer came he looked to the boy with disgust. He had already lost control of his bowels. He released him from the curse and kicked him away.

"Remove this pathetic excuse for a Death Eater from my sight. I must say, the quality of followers I have has greatly diminished over the years. No self respecting Death Eater should last under ten minutes." Again no one answered. "Greyback! Take this thing down to the pit and teach him to embrace pain."

"Yes my Lord." The Man walked over and hoisted him up by the ankle. Flint dangled helplessly, as the Lord of the Werewolves walked out with his newest toy.

"And tell Wormtail to come up. It seems that an old friend of his has returned."

"Yes my Lord."

"Were Bellatrix?"

"She's with a healer, my Lord."

"How badly was she injured yesterday."

"Some of the wounds were severe, but she should make a full recovery."

It was such a pity. In her youth, she was his best Death Eater. There was nothing that she would fail to do for him. The years at Askaban had not been kind. She had lost what she once was. She failed to bring him the prophecy, failed to bring him Longbottom, as well as loosing the Weasley girl. Now she had to chance to bring him the Potter boy and failed once more. She will have to be reeducated in what he expects from one of his inner circle, as well as a lover.

The doors to the chamber burst open and three battle worn Death Eaters came in. Their robes were torn and had scorch marks from curses that just missed them.

"My Lord. We've lost control of the Ministry and the Wizengamot."

"Crucio!" The first fell under the curse. He thin looked to the other two. "Explain Now!"

"A massive shakedown...at the Ministry. Everyone was being checked for the Dark Mark. If they were found, they were shackled with magic blockers and their wands were broken on the spot. Those that we had under the Impero have been freed. We had to fight are way out. We were attacked by civilians as well. They kept screaming about the spoils of war."

"They are after our vaults, my Lord!"

"Your grasp at the obvious is astounding Crabbe. We will have to secure what's in our vaults first. They will be too busy at the ministry and under manned to give the goblins proper aid. They should have stayed neutral. It is time that we make a hefty withdraw."

"What about the Ministry my Lord."

"We will let the dust settle first. What has been lost will be reclaimed, mark my words."

"You summoned me my Lord?"

"Ah Wormtail, It seems that your old friend Black has returned and he has brought the Potter brat with him as well."

"He was never my friend my Lord."

"Never the less, I need to know all there is about him. He and the whelp fight differently than that of Dumbledore's followers."

"Of course, my Lord."

"Oh, there is one more thing you can do for me Wormtail."

"I live to serve you my Lord."

"The boy must be educated in the true use of power...Bring me the body of James Potter."

Emma was late for transfiguration. She had left one of her books in her room and she had to go back to get it. That was when she thought she saw Harry turn into a panther. It must have been her imagination. Wizards can't turn into animals...Can they? Her blood sugar must be off or something. Yeah. That's what it was. Well, she hoped anyway.

At breakfast, everyone was talking about the Daily Prophet. The theories of what really happened were quite entertaining. Longbottom claimed, quite loudly, that it was pure rubbish and that the Daily Prophet wasn't fit for the bottom of an owl cage. A bloke by the name of Dean reminded him that he kept a scrapbook of every article that was ever written about him. The two started to have a death-staring contest as everyone in ear shot had themselves a good laugh.

Mark was sure it was down played and that there was, in fact, an epic battle. Emma guessed there was a little hero worship going on there. His version of what really happened was much more riveting than what was in the paper. She really enjoyed watching him tell it, or was it that she really liked watching him? Once or twice, Gabby might have mentioned that she needed to stop drooling. She didn't care. He was really cute.

She was in such a hurry to get down to breakfast, so that she could get a seat next to him, that she forgot one of her books in her room. Pursa offered to go with her, but she told her go on ahead. She had just started to head down the stairs to the girl's dorms when she saw Harry transform. Now that she had time to think about it, she was sure that it was her imagination. She couldn't believe she actually fainted. Now she was late for class.

As she turned the corner, she ran into a wall of seventh year Slytherins. She fell on her bum, hard, and her books went everywhere. It would have been nice if one of them would have offered to help her up. By the look of them, though, that wasn't going to be an option.

"Hey, watch where you're going, you stupid little twit!"

"Then don't stand in the middle of the hall next time, you git!" Emma huffed out as she started to collect her scattered books. She had been told about the Slytherin attitude towards Gryffindors. A carrot

top by the name of Ron had told her last night. "They think they own the school. It's our job to remind the wankers that they don't." What he didn't tell her was what to do when one of them yanked you up by your hair. Because, let me tell ya, that hurts like hell. The prat had her held up so high that she was standing on the tips of her toes to keep from having her hair ripped out by the roots.

"Did you guys hear what this little mudblood just said to me?" Draco asked, as he motioned for Crabbe and Goyle to come over. Both laughed as they saw the girl with the changing hair struggling to get free.

"Hey, get off!" Emma decided to take a chance and kicked at his shin with one of her feet, but missed. She saw two big brutes surround her, laughing all the while. She was then thrown against a wall. The white haired boy pulled his wand and leveled it at her head. Emma swallowed hard. She was deep in it this time. This wasn't the first time she was outnumbered. No, at the orphanage it was an everyday thing. The only difference was that there were usually witnesses, so it never got too out of pocket. As far as she could, see they were alone. The other difference was that the bullies at the orphanage didn't have wands.

"I think she needs to be taught a lesson. What say you, Crabbe?" He cracked his knuckles in agreement.

"Well said. And you, Goyle?" That one just laughed at her. Emma's eyes quickly moved from one to the other, and then to the last one. The look of panic on her face made them laugh at her all the more. Think, girl, think...Wand...I've got a bloody wand too! Emma quickly reached into her robe and pulled out her wand, but before she could aim it, her arm was twisted up behind her back. She would have cried out in pain if she wasn't already accustomed to it. She had the prats at the orphanage to thank for that. She felt her wand being ripped from her hand and heard it snap.

"Oops, that was clumsy of you, Crabbe. Now the poor little mudblood is without a wand."

"She probably doesn't know any spells to begin with."

"She looks like she going to cry."

"Are you going to cry, mudblood?" Their taunts kept coming at her, one after another. Emma wasn't a crier. Crying never solved anything. It didn't make the pain go away, or give you back your dignity. No! She wouldn't give them that satisfaction. The three of them were so busy laughing at her expense that a gap opened up for her to run through. Emma didn't hesitate. She ducked down so that she just missed getting grabbed by one of them, and ran as fast as she could, but her legs suddenly locked together, causing her to fall on her face. Then she felt an unseen force lift her upside down. As she dangled there she saw the three of them lazily stroll over to her. Emma screamed out for help but no sound came out of her mouth.

"Unlike Granger, we know when to use a silencing charm, you filthy little mudblood." The three Slytherin's then proceeded to pushing Emma from one to the other in some sick game of catch. All the blood was rushing to her head and all the spinning was making her nauseous. It was then that the necklace that Harry gave her fell from around her neck and onto the floor. She cursed herself for not thinking of it sooner. He told her that it would keep arseholes like these three from messing with her. She was fairly sure that he told her a word to use. For the life of her she couldn't remember what it was at this moment. Help me! Will someone please help me! Her silent prayer was answered a lot sooner than she thought it would be.

For what seemed like hours, but was more like half a minute. Daphne watched as Draco and his knuckle daggers tormented the little Metamorphmagus. Her first survival instinct told her to walk away. Better to be an observer, than a victim. She had no connection to this girl. There was nothing to be gained by stopping this before it took a dark turn. With those three, it was just a matter of time before that became a reality. It wasn't like it her sister that they were doing this to. Then the image of her little sister flashed in her mind. It was followed closely by Tracy, the only one in this school that came close to being called a friend. Her face was the next to appear and she put herself in the girl's place. Wouldn't she want someone to come to her aid? No, she was too smart to go wandering the halls alone.

The last face for her to see was that of Ginny Weasley. The guilt that she had buried deep inside her for six years came bubbling to the surface. It was so strong that she wanted to vomit. She was doing it

again: looking the other way and not taking a stand. She was a Slytherin for a reason. She had no delusions of grandeur. She knew herself well enough to know that she wasn't a brave person. The question was, however, could she live with herself if she did nothing? Think, Daphne, think! There has to be something that you can do! A calm fury washed over her and she made her decision. At long last, Daphne Greengrass was picking a side.

"Honestly! Just when I think that you three can't bring the name of Slytherin lower, you go bathe in the foulest muck you can find." A blond seventh year was marching over to the three boys. The two bigger prats stopped immediately, but Draco just sneered at her.

"Mind your own business, Greengrass. This is none of your concern."

"Hanging out with this lot has actually made you more obtuse, instead of making them acute. How the three of you made it into Slytherin is beyond me. Attacking a student out in the open like this? You should have been put in Gryffindor. No, I'm giving you too much credit. They have more common sense than that. And a first year, no less." Daphne ranted as she used the counter curse to free Emma. She knew that she had to play this carefully. If she let on that she was helping a muggle born for anything other than House status reasons, she would end up trading places with the poor girl. She was helping her up when she saw the necklace on the floor. The crest of the House of Potter was shining brightly.

"Nobody care what happens to some stupid orphaned mudblood." Daphne rolled her eyes as she picked up the necklace. She turned to face the three of them. She looked at them with disgust as she put herself between them and Emma.

"I hate to repeat myself but, seriously, how did the three of you get into Slytherin? Every time you three do something like this, Slytherin is more and more alienated. If the war comes to these halls Slytherin will stand alone. And another thing, has it escaped your limited attention, that this girl in less than a day has aligned herself with a Noble Lord?" She displayed it for them to see. All three visibly paled.

"Shite!" Crabbe and Goyle yelled in unison, while Draco quickly recovered and gave his usual sneer. He didn't like being talked to in this manner. A year ago she wouldn't dare speak to him in such a

manner. Unfortunately, much had changed in that year. With his father's incarceration, the name Malfoy had lost its former power. In the past, just the mention of his father would make even grown Wizards cower before him. He had been stripped of his Noble status and his Family Vault was confiscated by Lord Black. It was only due to the man's charity that Malfoy Manor and his Trust Vault remained. Due to reckless past spending, hardly any of his gold was left. He no longer had any house elves to boss around, either.

His mother hadn't been seen since just after the Ministry incident. Not that he interacted with her much to begin with. Father had always said that her usefulness to him ended when she gave birth to him. She wasn't allowed any say in his upbringing, as his father took full control of that. In time, he came to view her just as his father did.

"Nice going there, little one. You've impressed a Noble Lord. You may survive this year after all. However, in the future I suggest better judgment. It is never wise to wander the halls of this castle alone." Daphne placed the necklace around her neck so that it was displayed nicely for all to see.

"Thank you."

"When you tell Lord Potter of this, please try to stress that not all Slytherins are like this lot." She stressed the tell part and Emma got the meaning immediately.

"These sods broke my wand." Emma said as she gave her most evil snarl at them. Daphne looked over her shoulder at them in disgust.

"Oops"

"Bugger! Are you three really that daft? Honestly, what are you, 5?"

"Careful, Greengrass. Your losing that polished charm of yours."

"Yeah, you'll be talking like a Weasley in no time."

"As if your opinion even matters, Crabbe. I'll make sure that this one gets to her class. You three leg it to DADA before you bring more sham to Slytherin."

"Piss off, Greengrass! I don't take orders from you." With that Draco stormed off, with Crabbe and Goyle at his heels. Daphne let out a breath. That was too close. It could have easily gone a different way. She played the disgusted Heiress well, but she knew that it was only a matter of time until Malfoy would have done something. At the same time, she felt exhilarated. She had never done something so bold in her life. Perhaps she had a little Gryffindor in her after all. One thing was for sure: she was done with sitting in the spectator stands. It was time for her to join the game.

"Thank you." Emma said after she was sure that the boys were out of earshot. Daphne gave her a soft smile, then she waved her wand and Emma's broken wand flew into her hand. She shook her head and mumbled something under her breath. With another wave of her wand, the broken one knitted itself back together. Her mouth dropped at the ease that the flaxen haired Slytherin performed the wordless spells.

"Here you go. Give it a try." Daphne said as she handed Emma's wand back to her. Emma gave it a go and a few portraits shook but nothing more. Daphne looked dejected. She was sure that it should have worked. Then it occurred to her that if they took the wand from her it probably doesn't recognize her as its master anymore.

"Sorry, you'll probably going to have to get that replaced."

"It's okay, it didn't work all that well to begin with."

"Where did you buy it?"

"I was abandoned at an orphanage. It's what was given to me. Not that there was much to chose from, to begin with." Daphne let out a frustrated breath. She felt that no matter how hard she tried she was always going to be running to catch up with everyone else.

"How do they expect you to become competent witches with castaway's wands and hand-me-down books? The last one to use that could have been completely mental. You could end up blowing off all your hair."

"What? You don't think I could pull off that look?" Emma joked. Daphne looked at her with a blank stare before the corners of her

mouth curved up and her eyes softened. Then at the same time they both broke into a laughing fit.

"Just how much do you know about the world you just stepped into?"

"Emma. My name's Emma." She offered the Slytherin an open hand. Daphne took Emma's hand into her own and gave it a healthy shake.

"Daphne Greengrass at your service."

"To answer your question, Daphne, only what's been told to me or what I've heard through conversation. Why?"

"Rule #1: know your environment, or do you just jump in murky water head first?" Emma gave her a firm nod. "Go to the library tonight after supper and find me. I'll get you all the books that you need to read. Don't bother with *Hogwarts: a History*, it's long winded and will suck the life right out of you. Rule #2, we're in the middle of a war. Never, I repeat, never go anywhere alone. Rule #3, this is your first line of defense. Wear it always." Daphne ended pointing at her necklace.

They walked in silence as Emma was escorted to her Charms class. The whole time, something was gnawing at the back of her mind. It wasn't until that had gotten to the door of her class that she was able to pluck up the courage to ask her.

"Not that I'm complaining or anything, but, why are you helping me?" Daphne stopped dead in her tracks. For a second Emma thought she had crossed a line and made her mad. She didn't expect Daphne to look down at her with pride. She was even smiling at her. She rubbed the top of Emma's head teasingly.

"There might be some Slytherin in you after all." Then her face turned serious and she knelt down so that they were eye level. "Redemption."

"Redemption?"

"Yes, redemption, Emma. I'm not really sure just why I'm telling you this. Maybe I want at least one person to know I'm not the cold-hearted bitch everyone seems to think I am. You see, a few years

ago, another first year was in trouble, no one seemed to notice but me. Not her brothers, not the Professors, no one. The thing that I regret the most was that I did nothing. I told no one. She suffered when she didn't have to. All because we were in different houses and I wasn't strong enough to go against the stupid house rivalry. I was a coward."

"Well, I think your brilliant, and you were brave today, so, thank you."

"Don't let it get around. I have a rep to protect." Emma made the motion that she was zipping her lips shut, which made Daphne laugh again. She stood up and opened the door to the charms classroom.

"Ah, this must be my missing Gryffindor?"

"I am sorry for her late arrival, Professor."

"It's no problem what so ever. It's a big castle, and I swear those moving staircases mess with you on purpose. Emma, please take a seat."

"Thank you again. You're a lifesaver, Daphne." Emma said with a smile and then took a seat that Mark was obviously saving for her. When she was settled, Mark leaned in and whispered. "What happened to you?"

"I don't want to talk about it." Emma whispered back.

"But..."

"No! Not here, not now. Just let it go." Emma hissed at him. He had the common sense to drop it, which she was very thankful for. The exchange did not escape the attention of Lily and Daphne.

"Oh. And ten points to Slytherin, for helping a girl who was in need. It's nice to see not everyone holds old rivalrys in such high regards." Lily warmly told Daphne.

"Well, we girls have to stick together or we leave the Wizarding World in the hands of the men. And that can only end in tears." This made the female population of the class burst out laughing. Mark

crossed his arms across his chest and huffed out. Emma looked back at Daphne just in time to see her give a quick wink at her.

"No truer... words... have... ever been spoken. Another ten points...to Slytherin." Lily managed to get out between laughs. Daphne gave a cheeky nod and turned to leave. At the door, she stopped and turned back around.

"Professor Potter."

"Yes, Daphne?"

"I saw you down by the lake this morning. I was wondering if it would be alright if I could join you tomorrow."

"I would love it. There is entirely too much testosterone down there as is." This wrought another round of laughter from the girls. Mark glared at Emma for finding it so funny. She answered him with a raspberry.

"Emma" The said girl snapped around to look at Professor Potter. By the look on her face, she must have thought she was in trouble for giving Mark the raspberry.

"Yes Ma'am!"

"I think you would benefit from that as well. In fact, anyone is welcome to come down. It's never too early to learn how to properly protect ones self. The training also helps you focus your magic better." Emma got a broad smile on her face, with thoughts of payback dancing in her mind.

"You know, you're kind of scary when you smile like that."

"And don't you forget it." Emma said with a pointed finger and raised brows. Again the class broke out laughing. Daphne took this as her cue to leave.

Due to the massive shakedown that was happening at the Ministry and the many battles that resulted in it, Gringotts was swarming with witches and wizards that were there to claim their new vaults. Correction, it was a bloody madhouse. The lines were all the way out to the main entrance.

"What's going on here?" Ginny asked a middle aged witch. The woman looked at her like she was insane.

"Are you daft girl? We're collecting our new vault, that's what. About time the Ministry did something right. Those bastards took my poor Samuel last winter. The only good Death Eater is a dead one in my book. They don't like it when they get Unforgivables thrown at them, now do they. Spoils of war. You just got to love those spoils of war. Oh dammit all to hell, I just lost my place in line. You want to know more, buy a copy of the Daily Prophet." With that she butted her way back into line.

Ginny's mouth was hanging open in shock. That was until she looked at Harry and saw that sly grin of his. That git knew this was going to happen. She narrowed her eyes at him.

"What?" Harry asked as innocently as he could. Ginny wasn't buying it for a second. She crossed her arms and raised a brow. When she didn't get an answer, she added a steady foot tap to emphasize her point.

"See, I can do that too." Harry was mimicked her to a t, but instead of having pursed lips, he opted of a broad smile. Ginny rolled her eyes, then turned around and stormed off.

"Fine...don't tell me...sniff...If you don't trust me...sniff...I would have told you...sniff...if you want to keep secrets...sniff..." Ginny faked wiping a tear away, all the while trying not to laugh. Now, it was Harry that was rolling his eyes. She was so adorable when she tried to guilt him like that.

"Do you really thing that's going to work? My mum wields guilt like a ninja." Ginny spun around and glared at him. She didn't know what the hell a bloody ninja was, probably one of those muggle things again, but she was sure he was trying to take the Mickey out of her again.

"Fine! Bite me then, ya git."

"Well if you insist." Harry said as he advanced on Ginny, with a gleam in his eyes. Ginny held up her hand to halt him. Then she waved a finger back and forth.

"Not so fast, big boy. We're here for a reason, remember?"

"Can't we do both?"

"You just a randy little bugger ain't ya?"

"What can I say? I'm gifted" Ginny crossed her arms over her chest and shifted her weight to one hip. "Okay, let's get you out from under grandpa time's boot."

"This looks like it's going to take awhile." Ginny motioned to the long lines before them. Harry chuckled at that, and then he wrapped his arm around her neck and whispered into her ear. "That's if you play by the rules."

"And if we played by the rules, we wouldn't be here right now." She said smiling as she leaned into him. Does he have to smell so good? She tilted her head to the side and offered him a clean shot at her neck. He parted his lips and slid them softly across her sensitive flesh, from her collar bone to her earlobe. He sucked it into his mouth, and didn't release it until a soft moan escaped her lips.

"I'll make a Marauder out of you yet." He whispered in her ear. Ginny's eyes shot open and she spun around to face him. His patronus, what he called his godfather, and the way he was able to find her so fast. There were too many quiescence's to be her imagination. He was connected to the map somehow. The Marauders still exist, and he's one of them.

"What did you just say?" She knows of them. How does she know of them? Now is not the time for this conversation.

"I'll explain later. Duncan!" A second latter a regal looking house elf popped next to Harry. Unlike other house elves that she had ever seen, this one was dressed in an elegant suit. Instead of being hunched over with a bowed head, he stood proud with his head held high.

"Master Harry, how may I be of service to you?" He doesn't even sound like any house elf I've ever seen.

"One of these days, I'm going to get you to call me just Harry."

"That will be right after Master Black takes the vow of chastity your mother's been pushing for." Harry laughed hard at that and the elf's mouth gave the slightest hint of a smile, though Ginny thought she might have imagined it.

"Good one, Duncan. I would like you to inform Griphook that Lord Potter is in need of his assistance."

"As you wish Master- Just Harry." Duncan gave a bow and popped away, but not before giving Ginny a slight wink.

"You should have seen him six months ago. Man, I never thought I would ever get that stick out. I think it was sideways at one point in time." Ginny just looked at him with her mouth hanging open. She had never met someone like him in her life. He was beyond explanation. Every time she thought she had him figured out, he went and threw a wild bludger into the mix. Then there was the fact that whenever she was close to him, she had no control over her more primal side. It was almost like she- Oh Balls! She would have to speak with Professor McGonagall about this. It had something to do with the Animagus form she was working on, she was sure of it. This would defiantly complicate things. In frustration she threw her hands up into the air.

"Who the bloody hell are you?"

A/N: Sorry that took so long to update. I have a Beta Reader now and I had a few technical difficulty's getting my story to her. Thanks again Ehmbur for all the help. I do realize that Harry and Ginny might be moving to fast, but there is a reason that they have such a strong primal attraction for each other. Thank you HufflepuffWitch for giving me the idea. As always please let me know what you think.

A/N: Well, here's the next chapter. I'm having trouble with my Email so I couldn't send it to my Beta Reader. I hope there's not too many mistakes. I really wanted to get this chapter out.

Sirius could tell by the look on the faces of his seventh years students that he was about to be bombarded with dozens of questions that had nothing to do with what the class was about. There wasn't a desk that didn't have the mornings Daily Prophet, with the exception of the four empty seats that belonged to some missing Slytherin's. He scanned the class and noticed that the students from the Houses that were present were clumped together. The exception was Longbottom he sat apart from his housemates. He gave off an air that left the impression that he was above sitting with them. The other Gryffindors didn't seem all that heartbroken about it.

The door to the classroom opened and three pompous looking Slytherin's walked in. A greasy white hair boy led the pack. He looked too much like his father to be anyone but Draco Malfoy. Sirius thought of his cousin Narcissa, and was glad at least she was able to escape that life.

"Mr. Crabbe, Goyle and Malfoy while in some circles it might be acceptable to be fashionably late, my classroom is not one of those places. Now, drop and give me twenty push-ups."

"What? I will do no such thing. I'm a Malfoy. You must have me mistaken for a common wizard like Weasley."

"Well, if you three lack the physical strength to do a simple push-up, who am I to point out your short comings? I will just leave it up to you, to explain to your fellow Slytherin's how you lost fifty points each to your house." Sirius waved it off as he turned to walk to the front of the class. His broad grin was hidden well from the class. It took a total ten seconds of murderous stares from their fellow Slytherin's to make them comply with Professor Black. Draco of course was the last to drop to the floor.

"Now, Mr. Weasley will you please come over here."

"Oi! What did I do?" Ron jumped up out of his seat and answered in a voice that was an octave higher then he intended it to be.

Hermione rolled her eyes at him and then pushed him toward Professor Black.

"Nothing, but since Mr. Malfoy here chose to take a shot at you, I thought it was only fitting that you help me administer the discipline." Ron looked down at Draco, whose face was at Ron's feet, and smashed one fist into his other hand. It made a smacking sound and he followed through by grinding his fist into his open hand. "Love to."

"Good, when Mr. Weasley gives the count, you three will lower your bodies one inch off the ground. As you come back up, all three will say, I will not be late for class again Professor Black. Be warned boys, if just one of you fails to say it, all three of you will repeat the push-up. Do I make myself clear Gentlemen?"

"Yes Professor Black."

"Very well, take it away Mr. Weasley."

"All right...1"

"I will not be late for class again Professor Black." Crabbe and Goyle said at the same time. Draco made no attempt to comply.

"Sorry Malfoy I didn't hear that." Ron gloated. Draco received two punches to his arms by his partners in crime.

"So help me Draco, if you get us in anymore trouble, I'll beat you myself." Crabbe warned him with a look that told him that Vincent meant business.

"Yeah, daddy's not here to buy you out of trouble anymore." Gregory added with a look that was as fierce as Crabbe's. Draco started to realize that he wasn't as foreboding without the threat of his father.

"Let try that again, and 1."

"I will not be late for class again Professor Black." This time all three of their voices were crisp, clear and could be heard by anyone that would have passed the class in the hall. Ron put them through the paces, with the biggest smile on his face. When they got to fifteen, Sirius decided to start the class.

"While they finish up, who would like to tell me what the best defense against the Avada Kedavra?"

As usual Hermione's hand was the first in the air. Before, Sirius could call upon her a voice from the back of the class answered first.

"That would be, to not be hit by one Professor." Daphne said as she stepped over her fellow Slytherin's.

"Ouch! Stupid witch!"

"Sorry Draco, was that your hand?" She said with total lack of sympathy. "I apologize for my late arrival Professor. I was escorting a lost first year to class...Professor?" Sirius was looking at her as if he had seen a ghost, and not the kind that wandered the halls of Hogwarts. After a few seconds he shook it off.

"Sorry about that. You look like someone I use to know. Anyway, you're quite right. My first choice would be to not be hit too. So we have avoidance, are there any others?"

"Hey! Why isn't she doing push-ups? She was late too."

"Because she told me why she was late, you three haven't. If you have something that you want to share, by all means feel free, but be warned boys, I despise liars." He got silence in response. Sirius turned his attention to the rest of the class. He saw Hermione raising her hand as high as it could possibly go without standing up.

"What about you, Ms. Granger?"

"Professor, there is no spell that can stop an Avada Kedavra." Hermione said in a matter-of-fact kind of way. Sirius chuckled to himself. There's one in every group.

"Don't put too much faith in what you read Ms. Granger. I stopped that spell in a graveyard two years ago, by summoning a headstone. Sadly, the headstone didn't make it, but as you can see...I did. Sometimes you have to think on your feet. Try to remember that the simplest of spells if used colorfully can win the day."

"Professor Black, excuse me for saying this, but what makes you qualified to teach us DADA? If I understand it correctly, you and the

Potters tuck you tails between you leg and ran after I killed Voldemort." Neville didn't bother wait to be called upon, hell he didn't even bother to raise his hand. He wanted to discredit him right from the off, and in doing so Potter as well. Even though Professor Black looks amused by it, Hermione was fast to scold him.

"Neville! He is a Hogwarts Professor and you will show him the proper respect!"

"Hey Lungs, I don't recall asking your opinion." Both Ron and Hermione jumped to their feet. Neither could believe what he just called her. True their friendship was strained of late, but they both had his back for the last seven years. Did he really think so little of them? Ron's Weasley temper was about to explode, when a firm hand was placed on his shoulder and he was forced back on his seat. Sirius looked down at him. He shook his head no. He then leaned over and whispered something into Hermione's ear. She snapped her head at Professor Black with a look of shock and amazement. "I can do that?"

"Are you not Head Girl?" Hermione turned and smiled wickedly at Neville. Screw what Dumbledore had told her. He was a spoiled little pampered prat, and he needed to be taught a lesson. Plus, after this no one would dare call her Lungs again.

"Mr. Longbottom, as Head Girl I will not tolerate disrespect to me or any other Professor. Therefore, for the remainder of the week you will be aiding the house elves cleaning up after supper. When they are done, you are done and you are not allowed to use magic of any kind what so ever."

"Well said Ms. Granger. With your permission, I would be more than happy to supervise Mr. Longbottom's detention."

"Thank you Professor Black."

"You can't do that to me! I'm...I'm-"

"A spoiled little princess?" Even as the words reached her ears, Daphne couldn't believe that had come out of her mouth. By the reactions of everyone in the room, neither did they. She was Daphne Greengrass the Ice Queen of Slytherin; she never spoke in class unless called upon. Now in the span of an hour she had took

pot shots at both Draco and Longbottom. She was breaking her own rules and it alarmed her. What surprised her more was that she didn't really care if she did? What's happening to me?

There was an odd silence in the room, until Dean Thomas started clapping. Seamus quickly followed and then the rest of the class joined in. Neville shot daggers at Daphne, then Hermione and finally Sirius.

"When Dumbledore hears about this." Neville threatened.

"I fully support Ms. Granger on this manner, and will give testimony before the Governors if the Headmaster wishes to challenge the Head Girls punishment. Personally, I would have had you cleaning the Owlery, but that's me." Sirius then addressed the class as a whole.

"Now, as much as the Chosen Princess rolls of one's tongue." He stopped to give a wink for the good cheek to Daphne. "I believe Longbottom's question still needs answering. I see all of you have today's copy of the Daily Prophet. That should be all the explanation that you need or that I will give on this matter. However, I can see that you have questions, so I will allow a few before we get back to class."

For the first time in his life, Ron's hand shot up before Hermione's. Sirius gestured to him and he stood up. "Professor, I have never seen robes like that before. My brother works with dragons and we still have a poster of all the different types of dragon hide there is in his old room. So my question would be what exactly is that wicked looking thing?"

"Well Weasley, the wizards across the pond call this a Trench Coat. It's all the rage over there and helps us blend in with the Muggles. The reason that you don't recognize the hide is that it isn't Dragonhide. Care to tell him what kind of hide it is Longbottom?"

"Basilisk" Neville answered reluctantly. Hermione gasped at his answer. The horrors of her second year played in her head. She should have recognized it, but then again, she tried to block out most of those memories. Occasionally, she would wake up screaming with visions of cold yellow eyes.

"That must have set you back? I hear that it's very rare and expensive."

"That it is Ms. Davis, but I got it for free. If you want the details of that story, I suggest you ask my godson. He was the one that killed the bloody thing."

When Duncan popped back with the Goblin Griphook in tow, Harry dropped to one knee and bowed his head. He addressed him in a language that Ginny had never heard before. Griphook in turn bowed to him and spoke the same language. Her brother Bill had told her once that the Goblins had their own language, until today she had never heard it before. Harry apparently spoke it fluently. Again the question she asked him just moments ago rang in her head. Who the bloody hell are you?

After the initial greeting, they broke into a long conversation. They were speaking in goblin tongue, and every once in a while Harry gestured to her. Griphook then looked over at her with a look of anger or shock. It was really irritating her that they were speaking about her and she didn't have a clue just what they were saying. At one point Griphook started to rant as he paced back and forth, all the while his voice was getting louder and louder. It wasn't until Harry placed a hand firmly on his shoulder that Griphook calmed down.

Their conversation continued in a more civil tone from that point on. The enraged look in the goblins eyes may have dimmed some, but it was far from going out. After a minute or two they bowed to each other, marking the end of the conversation that she was not allowed to partake in. Potter had better have a damn good reason for leaving me out of this, or he is going to become intimate with my Bat-Bogey Hex quick, fast, and in a hurry.

"Master Griphook, I have the honor to introduce you to Ms. Ginerva Weasley, but if you value your life I would address her as Ginny." Ginny gave a quick curtsy, then gave Harry a quick glare. Your going to pay for that one Potter. "Ginny, this is Master Griphook. He will be aiding you today."

"It will be an honor to be of service to you." Griphook bowed to Ginny in response. He then turned to Harry. "All that we have

discussed will come to pass. A full investigation will be mounted and the guilty will be punished. You have my word on it."

"That is all I can ask of you. Please take good care of her for me. I will be back here in...Two hours is it?"

"Yes Lord Potter."

"Wait, you're not coming with me?" Ginny moved over to Harry. In the beginning she wanted to do this alone, but Ginny found that she kind of liked having him around. Harry motioned for her to follow him away from Griphook. The goblin understood that they needed a private moment and stayed where he was. Once by themselves, Harry noticed a stray clump of hairs in Ginny's face. Her eyes kept looking at it. Ginny hated it when her hair didn't cooperate with her. Harry however, found it completely adorable. It was so very Ginny.

"You said you needed to do this on your own. I might not like it, but I'll respect your wishes. All I've done was clear the path a little bit. I'll leave it up to you to kick the doors in." He spoke softly to her, as he caught the stray hair between two fingers. He tucked it gently behind her ear and took this opportunity to play with her earlobe. Her hand came up and cupped his when he started to pull away. She rather liked that sensation and didn't want it to end.

"Oh...I did say that didn't I." Harry gave her a nod.

"Now, I suggest you set up a tuck and roll account."

"A tuck and roll account?"

"How did you think we kept under I'm-an-old-fart-that-thinks-he-knows-what's-best-for-you radar for 16 years."

"Radar?"

"Don't worry; I'll have you speaking Muggle in no time."

"Muggle, I'm still trying to decipher your bloody Yank."

"Whatever, it was how we hide our gold when my family was on the run. Griphook has agreed to keep your assets hidden until you are of age." Ginny looked down for a few seconds to gather her

thoughts and she bit her bottom lip. She wasn't sure what amazed her more the fact that he was unlike anyone she had ever met before, or how much he was being there for her. When she looked back up at him, Harry swore he had never seen more beautiful chocolate brown eyes before. They pulled him in so deeply that he didn't even register it when she pulled his face to hers. Their lips met and the waves of their emotions came crashing together. Ginny grabbed two fists full of his untamed hair and held on tight. He wasn't going to pull away this time without a fight.

His arm snaked around her waist pulling her into him, as a hand slid up her spine until it came to the base of her head. The sensation made Ginny's toes curled. Harry had no intention of letting her go anytime soon. The panther in him was fighting to get out again, however this time he was too caught up in the moment to care. Ginny was in the same boat. She had totally forgotten that they were currently in the lobby of Gringotts and that it was full of witched and wizards. Both of them were oblivious to the flash of a camera going off just a few feet away. Ginny was the one to pull away this time. They rested their foreheads together as they took in some much needed air.

"Thank you for...well, for everything I guess." Ginny whispered as she tried to get control of her breathing.

"You're welcome."

"Well...I suppose I better go then." Though, it was the last thing that she wanted to do. Harry watched he go off with Griphook. She looked back at him and smiled before she disappeared into a swarm of people. Once she was completely out of sight his smile dropped and was replaced by a fiercely determined look. He hoped that she would forgive him, but there were a few doors that he needed to kick in himself. It was time to do things the Marauder way.

Malcolm Douglas knew that one day his sins would come back to haunt him. He knew what Dumbledore asked him to do was wrong, but the man had a way of making you do what he wanted. Even if your own common sense tells you it's wrong.

Dumbledore told him it was for the girl's protection, that in the end it would be for the best, it was all for the greater good. Oh how he

came to hate that phrase. It haunted his sleep. Then again, that's the price you pay for making a deal with the devil.

This realization came one day too late. For at this very minute his feet were dangling a foot off the floor of his office. His right arm was broken in three places, he had two cracked ribs, and the only reason his jaw wasn't broken was that he needed to answer questions. His throat was now slowly being crushed by the hand of Lord Potter.

"That was an attention getter. I have your attention right?" Garry growled at him. The man managed to nod his head. On a different day Harry might even feel sorry for the man. Unluckily for Malcolm, today wasn't that day. Mercy was something he would find at the hands of Harry Potter.

"Now, we could play the game where I ask questions and you lie to save your sorry ass. The truth is I don't have that kind of time. I despise using this technique, it makes me like him, but this isn't about me."

With that, Harry ripped his way into Malcolm's mind. He was surprised to find that Dumbledore put a guardian in the man's mind. The old fart really did cover his bets. The problem was that the guardian wasn't there to protect, it was there to destroy the man's mind if anyone got that far.

A massive stone Gargoyle with huge claws jumped up the moment Harry entered the man's head. It immediately started to rip apart the man's mind from the inside out. Even though the Gargoyle was impressive, it was no match for Harry's hybrid form. The battle was fierce, but in the end it was Harry that was standing over a pile of crumbled gravel.

"Thank you. He's been holding me prisoner for so long." Harry turned around to see a small boy of about seven. He gathered that this was the man's innocence, or maybe it was his conscience.

"You're welcome. However, I am not your friend. You have helped to hurt someone that I...that is very precious to me." Harry corrected himself.

"I know of who you speak. I tried to change his mind, I really did. I almost had him convinced too, but the old man came and put that

thing in here." The boy said as he pointed at the fallen Gargoyle. Harry understood. He knelt down so that he could look the boy in his eyes.

"I need your help. I need to know everything that the old man made him do."

"Well heck! That's easy." The boy put his hand on Harry's head and all the memories came in at once. Harry saw everything...everything that they had done to control Ginny. That bastard is going to pay!

"I need him to help her. Can you make him help her?"

"Yes, he never wanted to do it in the first place. It's just, he's a..."

"Coward?" The boy nodded. "If he helps us, I can protect him."

"He said he will do anything you ask." Harry grinned.

Madam Bones was just sitting down to have some tea when her secretary rushed into her office. It was well known that this was her private time of the day. As head of the M.L.E, her day was often stressful and she found this calm time before the storm as they say was crucial to keeping a steady head in the most difficult of situations.

"This better be good Alice." She scolded her secretary.

"Lord Potter is here to see you Madam Bones. He said it was quite important." Alice squeaked out.

"Harry's here? Well, just don't stand there with flies coming out your mouth. Send him in girl." Amelia ordered her. She stood up and adjusted her clothes and looked into the mirror to see if her hair was in place. She then rolled her eyes and scolded herself for acting like a silly little school girl. She was old enough to be his mother. Who am I kidding? I'm old enough to be his mothers much older sister. Lily would kill me if she knew I had such thoughts.

"Madam Bones thank you for seeing me on such short notice." Harry greeted as he walked across the room. Amelia offered her hand to Harry. He took it and bowed down and kissed the back of her hand, and then from the position, he looked up and gave her a little wink.

"Alice hold all my appointments until this is concluded."

"Of course Madam Bones." Alice said as she did her best to keep from smiling. She had never seen Madam Bones blush before, though she couldn't blame her. He was quite yummy. As soon as the door closed, Amelia slapped Harry in his arm.

"Wicked boy! You made me blush in front of my subordinate. You know I'll never hear the end of this. Oh dear, now I've gone and encouraged you."

"You cut me to the quick Madam Bones."

"Don't you dare start with that! I do believe that you have earned the right to call me Amelia. If it wasn't for your family I would have died at the hands of Voldemort. That bastard has killed most of my family."

"I'm just glad we were able to get there in time. It was my godfather that uncle Lupin that held them off. I was just transportation."

"That's rubbish and you know it. I saw you take out a few of his followers before you got to me. Plus, you aided your mother in healing me. She's quite the healer, your mum. "

"Well, Sirius and I gave her lots of practice on that front."

"Poppycock! I was at death's door and your lot pulled me back. That is a debt that I can never repay, but enough of that. I assume you're here for a reason?" Harry pulled three vials of memories and placed them in front of Amelia. She looked at them questioningly. One by one she viewed them in her pensive, while Harry patiently waited. She returned to her desk with a look of disgust.

"Before you ask how I got that last memory, let's just say, ignorance is bliss. First he has to make right what he help cover up, but before this day is over he will surrender himself to the goblins. I promised them first crack at him."

"Perhaps that is for the best. I might kill him myself. What he did is unforgivable."

"Now you understand why Dumbledore must be brought down."

"Indeed, it will not be easy though. The man has serious connections and he's damn good at the game. I'll need more proof than this."

"I expected that. From some of the stories that were being passed around last night. This isn't an isolated incident. Perhaps an investigation is in order."

"It would have to be undercover. By the look on your face, I see you have someone in mind."

"With her natural ability's, she is the perfect choice. Officially, she could be sent as security. She's all ready in his Order so he won't suspect her. If anything I bet he'll ask her to spy on me."

"The only problem I see is that she's worked hard to gain the respect of her peers. You know how Metamorphmagus's are viewed in the wizarding society. You wouldn't be suggesting this because she's pregnant?"

"Please, my mum raised me better than that, but I won't lie to you. Possibly, the next Lord Black rests within her womb. I don't doubt her skill, but Butthead came after me when I was just a baby. So yes, I want to keep those that are important to me close. I won't apologize for that."

"I understand. I'm guessing, if this came from me, she would be more receptive?"

"You were her inspiration to become an Auror. She holds your opinion in very high regard."

"I agree with you Harry, she is the best woman for the job. I want you consider that this could get very ugly. Even with you backing her when this goes before the Wizengamot and with overpowering evidence, it will be a hard battle. Since the Department of Mysteries incident Longbottom and Dumbledore have become untouchable. Much of what really happened there has been kept quiet. Dumbledore has even Obliviated some of his own people's memories. Only a select few know that it wasn't the flawless victory that was portrayed in the Daily Prophet."

"Are you one of those few?"

"I am. Before you ask, I must tell you that I had to swear on my magic. I cannot speak of what happened in the Department of Mysteries. But as Head of this Department, I have access to other information. What I can say is that Bellatrix Lestrange took a prisoner that night. Thankfully she was recovered a few days later." Amelia was choosing her words very carefully and emphasizing the right ones. Harry went from relaxed to alert in half a second. He leaned forward in his seat.

"A girl with white hair?" Now it was Amelia that was on the edge of her seat. She should have known.

"Lestrange's prisoner was under a Glamour Charm, and, a very powerful one at that. Thank Merlin; those who rescued her weren't fooled by it. She did say that an old woman with a pet kitty healed her up. If I remember correctly, she said the woman had green eyes. Now, why do I get the feeling that she wasn't the only one under that charm...Shadow?" Without a word Harry stood up and walked to the door. He stopped and looked back at Amelia with a smile.

"Then I would say that is the reason that you're the Head of this Department."

A/N: Well, there you go. Now as for Amelia, I got a wild idea to make her more interesting, and went with it. Now, for Sirius's reaction to Daphne. She looks a lot like her mother, so you figure it out. Harry and Ginny are starting to connect the dots. Who will figure it out first? Expect a big fight at Gringotts in the next chapter. Please let me know what you think. I love getting reviews.

Ginny had concluded that she was having a very productive day. It wasn't going the way she had expected it to go that was for sure. When she was summoned to the Headmaster's Office, she was sure it would have gone straight to hell. A year ago she wouldn't of had the strength to stand up to Dumbledore. Then again, she wasn't the same person she was back then, either. Back then, she was weak, pathetic even. She was trapped in a life she wanted no part of. Yet she did nothing to change it.

She believed the lies that she was told without question. Accepted her fate, as if it was her duty for what happened in her first year. It was often thrown in her face when she showed any signs of independence, or whenever she dared to think for herself, or even state an opinion the hadn't been given by someone else.

She had followed Neville into the Ministry that night. Ginny knew it was a bad idea, yet she never said anything. As always, she just accepted her fate as penance for past sins. Yeah, she was pathetic, but if she hadn't gone with them? If she hadn't been captured. Tortured. Rescued? Would she had become who she is now? Perhaps something good did come out of all that...

She would never have met Shadow. Her Dark Knight in shining black fur, as Tonks would often tease her. She didn't care. When she woke up, he was there, always standing watch over her. He never left her side during her recovery. When she feared that she would be a scared freak, he would give her a reassuring lick. When she couldn't sleep, his purr was her lullaby. When she looked into his green eyes, she saw unconditional acceptance. Plus, she loved to run her hands through his fur. He was like the best security blanket ever.

The only time he left was when Mrs. Evans ordered him out. Usually it was when she needed to be bathed or her bandages needed changing. The gray haired old woman promised her that she wouldn't let her wounds scar up. Mrs. Evans applied the ointment every few hours for what seemed like days. It itched like crazy, but if Ginny so much as thought of itching, Shadow would pounce on her and lick her face till she swore she wouldn't. They took really good care of her.

It was three days before Tonks woke up. She was badly hurt that night. Ginny remembered the air above her ripple like water. A

second later Tonks fell through it, as did a spell that just missed her. Ginny could hear the battle raging around her. She wanted to go and help Shadow, but knew Tonks needed her more. It was then that she saw a huge werewolf coming at them. In a frenzy she rolled Tonks onto the portkey. At the last second she was pulled away just as Tonks vanished.

What happened after that came in bits and pieces to Ginny. She remembered being dragged back to that unholy Manor. The feel of a large clawed hand around her throat. The smell of foul breath in her face. A glimpse of what looked like a black werewolf with its claws around Lestranger's neck, yet something was different about it. Then the warmth of fur shielding her naked body from the cold night as trees blurred by. She remembered the sound of a door being destroyed, only to be followed by the scream of a woman. Then everything went black.

She woke to the comfort of a warm bed. The pain that was her only constant since she was taken had considerably lessened. A large panther peacefully stood watch at her bedside. His steady purr had a soothing affect on her, reassuring her. She knew instinctively that he was a protector. He was her protector. For the first time in a very long time, she had felt truly safe.

She didn't want to go when Lupin came to take her home. The only good thing to come out of it was that he was very attentive to Tonks. She guessed that almost losing her helped him remove his head from his arse. Tonks of course was in heaven. Ginny, not so much. Though her family was great, they hovered a wee bit too much. It was the nights that were the worst. The nightmares came even worse than they did after the Chamber of Secrets. It got so bad that she stopped sleeping all together. She withdrew from her family. How could she tell them? How could they possibly ever truly understand?

Thankfully, Tonks came by to check up on her. She sized up the problem and was able to get Ginny to open up. She herself was having trouble sleeping, but Tonks had someone sharing her bed to comfort her now. Merlin, she missed Shadow. Ginny told her that he always made her feel safe and protected. The next day Tonks gave her a stuffed panther that purred. It even sounded like his purr. She slept soundly that night, with dreams of running through a field next to her Dark Knight in midnight fur. They stopped at a water hole, and

when she bent down to take a drink, a Tempest Jaguar was looking back at her. It's fur was like quicksilver, and it's brown eyes had a star-burst design that pulsed with electricity.

As luck would have it, Professor McGonagall came by to go over what she missed at the end of the year. In truth, Minerva never could forgive herself for what happened to Ginny in her first year. It happened on her watch, as she so often said. Upon returning to Hogwarts for her second year, Minerva made Ginny a teachers aid. She often called on Ginny to aid her in grading papers. It was funny that this often happened when Neville was being a bigger arse than usual. Over the years, she helped Ginny with spells that were well beyond her age. Minerva would conveniently leave a book from the restricted section open on her desk. Then make an excuse to step out of her office.

Ginny told her about the dream and Minerva was beside herself with joy. The woman actually giggled like a school girl. She told Ginny it wasn't a dream, but a vision of her Animagus form. She told Ginny that a Tempest Jaguar was a Magical Creature that hasn't been seen in over a century.

An idea formed in her head that day. One in which maybe she could escape the life she had been saddled with. All she had to do was become an Animagus. Professor McGonagall help her achieve that goal over the course of the next year. What her wise Professor neglected to tell her, though, was that she would go through Bloody Heat Cycles. No, she thought she would have remembered that little conversation.

She remembered how Harry purred in her ear and the effect it had on her. If Harry was reacting the way he was to her, added with her own primal urges whenever he was close to her, it meant only one thing: he was an Animagus too, and probably one that was a large feline, like hers. Before she could put more thought to her epiphany, the car came to a halt in front of her new vault.

Ginny stepped off the car and looked at the massive doors. It was covered with cobwebs, due to lack of use. A key turn later she was standing in the middle of the first thing that she could call truly hers. In the middle was a mountainous pile of gold. From her Bank statement, she knew that it was around 497,736 Galleons, 586,2943 Sickles, and 83,719 Knuts. She also had three properties, a

Chateau on the Southern Coast of France, a cabin in Scotland, and house in Whales. Of course, that was just a rough estimate.

Dilys had told her to get a few items that were in her vault. She specified that Ginny should take her wand, her diary, and most importantly, her personal Spell Book. The wand was because it would be unregistered. Ginny's blood would assure that it would chose her as it's new master. Dilys had made it herself and some of her own blood was laced in the core. It was a tradition that has been lost over the two hundred years since she walked the earth. Even if she was disarmed the wand would only work for Her or someone of her line.

Her diary was so Ginny could get to know the woman she was. Perhaps there would be some insights, and a few life lessons within the pages that would help Ginny. Her personal Spell book contained family spells, as well as spells and charms that she learned through her life, and a few that she created herself. Ginny was sure that any healer at St. Mungo's would pay anything just to get a look at.

Ginny summoned Winky and they got to the task of finding them. Twenty minutes later she had what she was looking for, as well as a few things that she was sure would come in handy. Eventually. Among them was a bag of holding and one of Dilys's rings that worked as a portkey to her properties. Satisfied that she had everything she needed, she headed back up. She had a Magical Contract to get and a certain Noble Lord that had some questions to answer.

Ginny stormed into the Magical Contracts Office with the full intent to kick some bureaucrat's arse up and down Diagon Alley. She came to a cold halt when she felt the residual magical signature in the room. She had cleaned up after enough of Fred and George's experiments to know the signs.

The room was empty, with the exception of one man sitting behind a desk. Worry and regret was written all over his face. Ginny closed her eyes and let her other senses take in the room. They had become more acute these last few months, as she got closer and closer to achieving a full transformation. She picked up Harry's scent almost immediately, but it was a good hour old. There was a another scent as well. The strength of it led her to believe that it's owner was still in the room.

"I can smell you! Come out and face me." Ginny ordered to an almost empty room.

"Your sense of smell is astounding, human." A goblin said as it reviled itself. What stuck her as off, though, was that this one was a good foot bigger than most goblins. Instead of a business suit, it was draped in full battle armor. Even its head was covered. If it wasn't for the voice, she would have never suspected that it was a female. Come to think of it, she was sure that she had never even seen a picture of a female goblin before.

"Are you a female Goblin?"

"I am a Guardian of Gringotts, that happens to be female, human. Or do you think that the only thing we are capable of is breeding?" She snapped as she walked past Ginny and took a position behind Malcolm. The man whimpered and looked down at his desk, not daring to meet either of their eyes.

"I meant no disrespect. It's just that I've never seen one of you before."

"That is of our choosing not yours. We are well aware of how many of you view any species that dares to be...different." Ginny winced at her sharp tone, but guessed she had her reasons.

"We are not all like that." Ginny said as she walked up to her with a hand extended. "My name is Ginerva Molly Weasley, but my friends call me Ginny." The Gringotts Guardian looked at her outreached hand as if it was a foreign object. It was only when she concluded that the young witch posed no threat, did she remove her gauntlet and shook her hand.

"Hesta Nala Silverback." She took Ginny's hand and gave it a hard shake. Her grip was a lot tighter than what was necessary. When Ginny didn't break her smile or show any outwards signs of distress, did the woman return the smile. Ginny had the feeling she had just passed a test. "I apologize if I was brisk with you, Ms. Weasley. I have dealt with too many Ministry types. It seems that I have become what I despise. I have misjudged you. For that I am sorry."

"Please call me Ginny, and trust me, I know all too well how dealing with the Ministry can put you in a bad mood."

"You have no idea, and please call me Hesta. Now. Have you ever seen a bureaucrat wet themselves?" The two women shared a chuckle before the Goblin's face turned serious. Then it hit Ginny that the woman wasn't kidding about making the man piss his pants.

Death Eaters had slowly filtered their way into Gringotts, under the disguise that they were there to visit their vaults. With house elves in tow, the ones with the most to lose were charged with emptying their vaults. Three more teams had more distinct jobs. The first one, that consisted of the newest members, were positioned inside Gringotts to attack anyone claiming their vaults and, most importantly, to kill as many Goblins as possible. The team outside were there to cause the most panic. They consisted of Dark Creatures that had sworn loyalty to Voldemort. The last team was lead by Augustus Rookwood. The former unspeakable was charged with breaking into the Slytherin Vault and reclaiming all that laid within. Voldemort told him that he must retrieve Ravenclaw's Diadem at all costs. His master didn't tell him why it was so important, but he did know that he had Draco Malfoy remove it from it's hiding place at Hogwarts last year.

Once the inner circle's vaults were emptied and the Slytherin Vault breached, was the battle to begin. Rookwood's team consisted of ten members that had very unique set of skills. For two hours they diligently worked to bring down the ward that had been placed around the door. Augustus had to admit the boy was gifted. He knew that going in. They had successfully hid themselves for sixteen years. They had let loose a Basilisk on the Succubus Colony that Black was sworn to protect, in their hopes of flushing them out. It failed miserably and the Dark Lord wasn't happy to find that he lost both of his prized pets to the hands of the damn lightsiders.

"Augustus! The ward is down!" One of his team informed him.

"Foolish boy. Did he think that the wards would hold me for long?" Rookwood sneered as he advanced with the key that Voldemort gave him.

"Do you actually think that key will work?"

"It never hurts to try. Perhaps he was strapped for time and was only able to put on the one ward?" Rookwood inserted the key and turned it. He was thrown across the hall by the large volt of electricity that coursed through his body. The healer that he had assigned to his team rushed to his side. After a few healing spells, the man was able to get to his feet.

"I'll take that as a no." One of them joked. With a flick of Augustus's wand the man was thrown into the huge door. He immediately screamed out in pain as his body was electrocuted.

"So it would seem." Rookwood taunted him. No one attempted to aid the man. After five minutes he dropped to the floor, as the spell ran out of power. A good thing too, as the smell of charred flesh was quite revolting. A key turn later the door's numerous locks opened.

"The whelp is good, but I'm better." He said with a sneer as he marched into his master's vault.

Lily,

Good luck today, I know you'll be brilliant. Teaching is your true calling. It's just a shame that you couldn't achieve it until now. I know being at Hogwarts might bring back some old memories. You and Jimmy made so many there. You're a strong, confident, and gifted Witch, and much more braver than I. I know you will can do this. I say cherish the good memories, and toss the rest. I've missed our long talks, and look forward to Christmas at Potter Manor. We have so much to catch up on.

Now, I must ask something of you. I don't ask this as a friend, but as a Mother. You have a way of seeing through all the masks that we wear, and revealing the true person within. I know this because you saw through me. You helped me find my true self. I'm praying you can do this for my son.

I know what he's become. That was Lucius's doing, but he's tucked away in Azkaban now. It might not be too late for Draco. He was once a good boy. He's still in there, I know it. I'm begging you Lily. Bring me back my son. Please.

Forever Sisters,

Cissy

Narcissa had just finished her letter to Lily when Harry strolled up to her desk. He had only known her for about a year, but he was very fond of her. Her cheeks were stained with tears and her face held the look of a worried mother. The same look that he caused his own mum to have more times than he cared to admit. He decided she needed some cheering up. So he plopped his butt down on her desk, making her jump.

"You know, you have entirely too nice of a ass to be crying this early in the day." Harry teased as he wiped the tears from her cheeks. Narcissa recognized the game. She had seen him play it with her niece whenever they were around each other. She and Lily would laugh for hours at their antics. She decided to have a go and leaned in.

"And when were you looking at my arse young man?"

"The question is not when I was, but when I wasn't?" Harry asked with his trademark grin.

"And what would your mum say if she knew you looked at my arse?" Narcissa asked with a grin of her own.

"She would say I have excellent taste." Harry said leaning in more.

"Fancying a shag with an older witch, are you?" Narcissa closing the gap between them.

"Wouldn't be opposed to it." Harry got nose to nose with her.

"Only one problem with that big boy." She tugged playfully on his ear as she dangled the bait out for him to bite.

"Which is?" Harry asked as he nibbled at her bait.

"I used to change your diapers." Narcissa teased as she pushed his head back. She was sure that she had just won.

"A few things have changed down there since then. Plus it brings a whole new naughty level to it." Harry wiggled his eyebrows at her in victory. He tapped her cheeks that now showed a rosy tint. "I win."

"Your mum's right. You are incorrigible."

"Hard to believe that he used to be shy, isn't it?" Remus interrupted from the doorway. "Aren't you supposed to be at school or something?"

"There are many things that I should do that I don't."

"It's your wife's fault that he is like this, you know."

"Don't remind me. Well, Cub, what brings you here?"

"What? Perving on Aunt Cissy isn't a good enough reason for you?" Harry said as he gave her a wink.

"That's it, off with the lot of you. I have work to do." She shooed him off her desk and into Lupin's Office. Harry sneaked a kiss on her cheek before she closed the door.

"Dobby." With a pop, her most loyal house elf appeared at her side. She gave his head a friendly rub.

"Yes, Mistress Narcissa? How may Dobby serve you?"

"Take this letter to Lily Potter at Hogwarts please."

"Of course, Mistress." With another pop he was gone. Within Lupin's office the air took a more serious turn.

"What's going on, Cub?"

"Does the old fart still think you're in his control?"

"Yes. When I returned to England after Riddle's Diary was discovered, he confided in me about the Horcruxes. He paid me to hunt them down, and I have to say that his information was a lot better than mine had ever been."

"So what's left to destroy?"

"Well as you know, Longbottom destroyed the diary, Orion took care of the locket, Riddle used the ring to bring himself back, and I took out that damn snake myself. That leaves Hufflepuff's Cup, Ravenclaw's Diadem, and, sadly, Longbottom himself."

"How long do you think Dumbledore has known that he was one of them?"

"Right from the off. He doesn't know that I've figured that out. Narcissa said she was sure that Bellatrix has the cup in the Lestrage Vault. We know where Neville is. That leaves the diadem. Are you sure that it's in Slytherin's Vault?"

"I would if I were him. If it's in there, they'll be going for it soon. It was one of the reasons that I let it slip that I had the Slytherin Vault key. With any luck, they'll lead us right to it." Harry finished with an almost evil grin. Remus was glad he was on their side. He was far more devious than all of the Marauders combined.

"On a lighter note, I've just recruited two new Marauders. They were former students of mine, and trust me when I say that they are Marauder through and through. They are brilliant inventors. Just have a look at some of the products they've been supplying the Order with." Remus handed Harry three very long rolls of parchment. As he scanned the items for sale, his eyes held a gleam of mischief.

"Please tell me you've placed an order."

"Did I ever. And unlike Dumbledore, we will actually pay them."

"These guys have names, or are you just going to keep calling them They?"

"Fred and George Weasley."

Ginny watched as Hesta hauled off Malcolm Douglas. Whatever they were going to do to the man, it was too lenient in her book. He helped Dumbledore and Neville control every aspect of her life for the last few years. She was looking forward to some long overdue payback. She looked at Hesta and mouthed Thank You. Her new goblin friend bowed her head in respect. She then pointed to her

prisoner's couch; she had indeed made him loose control of his bladder.

With a Magical Contract that wasn't worth the parchment it was written on in her hand, Ginny headed back toward the main entrance. She had to find Harry. He had some explaining to do. She was conflicted as whether or not to be cross with him for confronting Douglas behind her back, or snog his brains out for well, just being him. Even if he was sometimes an overprotective git.

"Well, look what we have here, George."

"A little sister playing hooky from school."

"I don't know to be..."

"Shocked or..."

"Proud that we have..."

"Rubbed off on her."

Ginny stopped in her tracks and turned around to look at her brothers. She could see that they had once again managed to avoid a hair cut from their mum. It was really quite pointless. Sooner or later they would have to eat and no one cooked like their mum. Then she would have them right where she wanted them.

"What do you have there..." Fred started.

"Oh littlest of the Weasley's?" George finished his brother's question as he went to grab the parchment his little sister was holding. Ginny pulled it out of his reach, before hitting both of them on the head with it.

"None of your bloody business. Care to tell me why you two aren't at work? "

"You know you really..."

"Look like mum when..."

"You put your hands..."

"On your hips like that." Both ducked as a curse was sent at their heads before holding up their hands in defeat. "We surrender!" They both said in unison. Ginny pointed her wand warningly at them.

"Get cheeky with me again and you both know what spell I'll use on you."

"All hail Ginny..." They said together.

"The strongest..." Fred added.

"Deadliest..." George followed.

"And scariest Weasley of them all." They finished together, as they knelt at her feet. She patted them both on their heads.

"Good, and my servants know their places." Ginny teased them with her arms crossed over her chest. She could only hold the scowl for a few seconds before she burst out laughing. She lunged at her brothers and pulled them into a tight hug. George took the opportunity to try and snag the parchment from her hand. Again Ginny pulled it out of reach and then hit him in the head with it. She was about to hex him when she sensed something bad was about to happen.

"Do you two smell something foul?" Ginny asked as she looked around to find the source of her unease.

"We meet again, Ms Weasley. I dare say, my Lord will be most pleased when I deliver you to him."

Three wands leveled at the the Death Eater's head. His face may have been hidden under a glamour charm, but the three of them knew that voice anywhere. Ginny was the first to gain control of her voice.

"When the hell did you get out of Azkaban, Malfoy?"

"Well, not much need of this anymore." Lucius said as he waver his wand and his true face emerged. Azkaban was not kind to him. He had lost some of his good looks and now sported a long scare down his left cheek. "Ah, much better. As I was saying, I will earn much

favor with my Master when I lay you at his feet. Now come along quietly and I promise your brothers will have a painless death." Lucius mocked her as more Death Eaters surrounded them. Ginny glared at him. She wasn't handing her brother over to these bastards, and she sure as hell wasn't going to surrender herself to them.

"I'll tell you the same thing I told that bitch Lestrage." Ginny said in too sweet of a voice. "FUCK YOU, CUNT!" She screamed as she sent her most powerful Bat-Bogey at him. Malfoy pulled a new recruit into the path of the hex. As the man's screams drew the attention of every one around them, the Death Eaters withdrew their wands and formed a protective circle to defend themselves. It was all the distraction that the twins needed. Fred threw instant darkness powder around them as George threw three decoy detonators in different directions. With her brothers flanking her, Ginny led the way as the trio of Weasleys made a run for it.

Curses were flying in every direction as they made their escape as more and more Death Eaters came out of the woodwork. Fred opened a door to an empty office and the three ducked in before George cast a locking charm on the door.

"I'm rubbish with that. We need Bill, because that won't hold them for long."

"I guess we make our stand here."

"Or we call for help, you gits!" Ginny waved her wand and thought of a kitchen and the best snog she had ever had.

"Expecto Patronum!" A fully formed Patronus emerged from her wand. "Death Eaters have us pinned down. Their all over Gringotts. Get you sexy arse over here now!" With that her patronus ran through the wall and to it's intended target.

"One, who did you just call?"

"Two, how do you know..."

"He has a sexy arse?"

"And three, when did you..."

"change your patronus?"

"Things change," was the only response Ginny gave them. She was hoping it would get to him in time, as she really wanted to live long enough to snog him again.

A/N: There you go. I hope you like it. I'm going on vacation for a week, so the next chapter might be a little late. I hope not, but you never know. Please review.

Augustus Rookwood knew right where the diadem was. He didn't bother to gawk at the unrestricted volume of items that were stored within his master's vault. The rest of his team was doing enough of that for him. Idiots. Over the year, Voldemort had acquired quite a hefty collection of dark artifacts. His travels had taken him all over the world and it showed.

The urge to pocket some of them were almost too tempting to resist, but he knew better than that. His Master would slowly obliterate anyone that stole from him. He had seen the man in action too many times to be so foolish. If any of his team were idiotic enough to try...well, it would be interesting to see how long they would last. Forgiveness is not a word that one associates with his Master.

For that reason, he marched to the hiding place of his Master's most prized possession, ignoring everything else around him. He refused to be distracted by things that would get him painfully executed. If he had, he might have seen the two house elves that were watching them. One was dressed in a regal suit and the other in a majestic gown, both wore the crest of the House of Potter on them.

Duncan and his life mate Vonda watched silently as the bootlickers, as Master Harry was fond of calling them, searched the vault. They repressed their anger at the thieving scum, as it was a necessary evil. Master Harry had been very clear on what they were supposed to do.

Vonda slowly slid her hand into the one of her mate. She smiles slightly; it always sent a shiver down to her toes whenever she touched him. Duncan's scowl softened a little when she did it, though his eyes never left his target.

For five generations he has been the personal elf to Lord Potter, as Vonda had been to Lady Potter. They had been trained differently than other house elves. They were properly educated in all aspects of Wizarding Society, and understand them better than many on the Wizengamot do.

Most Wizarding aristocrats as a rule barely registered house elves unless they needed something. Lord Alexander Potter often used this to his advantage at dinner parties, and acquired most of his wealth through the practice. Many a skeleton had escaped from their closets due to good wine and the loose lips of aristocrats that should

have been more aware of who was serving them. Duncan was quite pleased when Master Charles forbade them from continuing the practice. He found the whole thing dreadfully untactful.

"You have kept my bed warm for over a century my love." Vonda's voice was soft but unwavering. Duncan gave her hand a small squeeze to show her that he heard her. He knew this conversation was coming and he would let her have her say.

"In that time I have watched you serve and watch over five generations of Potters. I have seen you smile down at them upon their births, worry over the choices they made, steady them as they prepared to bond with their life mates, and I've watched you weep over their graves. So please tell me why you feel that you must at this point die for them?"

"Master Harry did not ask this of me. This is my choice. He knows nothing of this, nor will he."

"He would not approve of this."

"I know that my love. These bastards robbed Master Charles of his life and Master James of the honor of sharing a warm bed with his mate and watching his youngling grow. For sixteen years we have heard his painting weep for those losses." Vonda bowed her head in shame. She had grown accustomed to the sound. She pushed it to the back of her mind as if it was a creak in a loose floorboard. To her mate it was like daggers in his heart. She lost count of how many sleepless nights he would sit and talk to the panting of James Potter. She never asked of what they talked about. It was private and she would never pry out of respect.

"I do not intend to shirk my bed warming duty to my life mate. Please understand that this is something that I cannot or will not let pass. This is as much for Master Harry as it is for Master James."

"I'm not an idiot Duncan! This is for you as well. I know you better than you know yourself my love. Just promise me...that you will come back to me."

"You have had possession of my heart for over a century. How could I not?"

"Good answer."

Rookwood had found the diadem just where Voldemort had said it would be. It was conveniently hidden in an old grandfather clock. He knew that it would kill any that touched it. He cast a wordless summoning charm, expecting the doors to burst open and the diadem to fly into his hands. However nothing happened. Again he cast the charm and again it was for naught. Frustration was starting to set in when he saw a suit of armor nearby.

"You there! Open that door!" He ordered a suit of armor after he had casted a spell to make it do his bidding. Zilch. Next Augustus performed a simple spell just to make sure that magic worked in the room. He wouldn't put it past his master to test him, or perhaps it was another trick left by Potter brat.

This time it worked. He noticed that his fellow Death Eaters were looking around worried. Something wasn't right about this vault. He felt it in his gut. The hairs on the back of his neck unexpectedly stood on end. Immediately he wished that he was asked to go fetch the body of James Potter instead of this damn diadem.

Duncan brought a finger to his temple and withdrew the memory of what he just witnessed. The silver memory dangled off the tip of his finger. He pulled a small vial out of thin air and deposited the silver liquid into it.

"Take this to Lady Potter." Duncan said as he handed the vial to his mate. Her hands were trembling when she took it. She knew that this may be the last time she would possibly touch her mate.

"Remember what I said, my love." Escaped Vonda's lips before hers claimed his. He never saw the tear streak down his cheek before she popped away. Duncan steeled himself, and then faced the enemy of his master. With a snap of the house elf's fingers the illusion in the vault vanished to reveal an empty vault with mirrored walls.

Lily was just finished reading the letter that Dobby had delivered to her. It was in between classes so she took refuge in her office as opposed to going to the teacher's lounge. She told Dobby that on the future to deliver any messages from his Mistress directly to her

office. It startled a few of the first years when he popped out if nowhere. Though, this gave her a perfect opportunity to introduce the students to a house elf, and to stress that they should be treated with respect and kindness.

She and the rest of the Marauders had found that house elves were a faster and more reliable means to send messages to each other. However it would not have been good if Dobby had popped in during her seventh year class. It was due to start in about five minutes and Draco would be there. She wasn't sure if he would recognize Dobby, but she didn't want to take the chance. She and Narcissa had kept their friendship secret for so long. It would put Cissy in unnecessary danger if it was discovered now.

Like it or not, Draco was on their enemy's team as of right now. She thought of her friend's request. She wasn't sure if she could deliver on it. Her being muggle born would be a huge handicap. She remembered how Harry and Draco would play together whenever Narcissa could sneak a proper visit. He was such a sweet boy back then, before Lucius twisted his mind. Everything that she had heard about him, led her to believe that it was a lost cause. Still, she would try.

Lily was so deep in thought that she didn't hear Vonda pop into her office. It wasn't until she felt her soft hand on her forearm that Lily looked up. Her personal house elf was holding a small vial with a silvery liquid in it. Vonda gave the vial to her Mistress.

"Already?" Lily asked as it registered what was probably in the vial. It was then that she saw that Vonda's cheeks were covered in tears.

"What happened?" When the house elf didn't answer her immediately, Lily knew that Duncan must have ordered her silence.

"As you Mistress, I hereby order you to tell me what has or is about to happen." Vonda was trained to control her emotions in front of humans and had done so for over a century. Today that tradition was broken. She was only able to get out a Thank you Mistress, before Vonda bursted into tears and threw herself at her Mistress. Lily cradled Vonda in her arms as the house elf wept into her chest. She told Lily everything that Duncan was planning on doing.

"Cub, you got that look." Lupin asked with a raised temple

"And what look is the Moony?" Harry questioned him with a look he thought was expressionless.

"The same look your father got when he was conflicted by something. So, spill it already." Remus prodded Harry. He knew it was only a matter of time before Harry couldn't hold it in anymore.

"Fine! You know it's really annoying that you can see right through my best poker face. Just how do you do that anyway? Mum, Padfoot, I can even snow Nymphy most the time, but you can see right past it."

"I've known you dad since we were able to pee our names in the snow. Like it or not, you have all his mannerisms. As for your mum, let's just say she humors you a lot more than you know."

"OH SHIT! Just how much does she know?"

"That's between the two of you. You'll just have to ask her yourself."

"No thanks, I still haven't gotten over the talk we just had." Harry said as he used his fingers to give emphasis to the words the talk.

"Perhaps she should have given you The Talk, before my cousin hauled you off to a Succubus Colony to get your oats sowed." Narcissa teased as she came in with a tray of tea for them.

"Why does everyone think we went there to fuck our brains out? Hello...an eighty foot Basilisk was on the loose. They called us for help, or has everyone forgotten that. As I recall, I even saved one of their younglings from becoming breakfast." Harry said in his defense. It was really irritating that everyone thought he was there to get his freak on.

"From what I heard, her mother was very grateful, as was her two sisters. Just out of curiosity, how many times did they thank you?" Narcissa inquired with an amused smirk on her face. Harry's face paled instantly.

"You know about that?" She nodded. That meant if she knew, than his mum was probably the one who told her. How was he ever going to look his mum in the eye again?

"Like I said Cub, Lily humors you a lot."

"She talked to the child's mother herself. She was very proud of you for what you did for them and very pissed that you put yourself that close to death to do it. As for the rest...it's not my place to say." Narcissa added as she put a reassuring hand on his shoulder, before she left the office. Harry found that he was very grateful that he skipped breakfast, because it would have been all over Remus's new office.

"Now what seems to be bothering you Cub?" Moony asked in an attempt to change the very sensitive subject. The gratitude on Harry's face was overwhelming.

"I had a very interesting conversation with Madame Bones today."

"I see."

"You were there the night that Longbottom went to the Department of Mysteries right?"

"Yes I was." Remus said very guardedly. Harry looked like a dog with a bone. Lily and his wife both made him swear to not tell Harry that Ginny Weasley was the one that he and Nymphadora rescued. Though, the reasons for keeping it secret no longer existed, and he felt Harry had every right to know. He had given his word, so he was honor bound to keep the secret.

"Did that bitch Lestrangle take Ginny Weasley prisoner that night? Harry knew that the wolf in Moony's mind made it impossible to be Obliviated.

"I can't answer that question Cub." Remus said with regret, as he closed his eyes and shook his head. He hated being in this position.

"Thanks, that's all I needed to know." Harry said with a colossal grin. He knew that if he was wrong, Moony would have simply said no.

A large silvery white patronus pounced into the office, and slid to a halt right in front of Harry. All doubts in his mind were crushed as he looked at a perfect copy of his animagus form that was in front of him. He was surprised by the amount joy he was feeling at that

moment. I found her! Only to have dagger plunged into his heart as he heard Ginny's voice tell him the message.

"CALL ALL AVAILABLE MARAUDERS TO GRINGOTTS!" Harry yelled as he leap to his feet, and activated his Signet ring that also served as a portkey

"Hold on Cub! We don't know the situation yet!" But it was too late Harry was already gone.

Ginny knew she didn't have the time to wait for Harry to get there. She could hear the Death Eaters on the other side of the door and it would be only a matter of time before they would break through the spell George casted.

Tonks had often told her that in combat situations that you should always go with your strengths. She had taught Ginny some hand to hand, as well as some wicked spells that didn't use up too much magic. She had a feeling that she would be putting a large strain on her magical core today. She didn't want to run out of juice at the wrong time.

Fred and George were looking at her like they were expecting an answer to their questions. They would have to be disappointed for now, because that was the least of their worries. They needed a plan and they needed it quickly. They also needed one of them to take command. Since her brothers weren't stepping up to do that, it was up to her.

"Alright! Empty your pockets boys. I need to see what we have to work with." Ginny said taking command, as every story Tonks ever told her came into her mind.

"Oi! Who put you..."

"In charge?"

"You two did when you just stood there with your wands up your bum's. We don't have the time for a peeing contest right now. Trust me boys, you won't like my aim." Ginny finished her statement with her wand aimed at their heads, and both of the gulped. Ginny took

that as an endorsement of her leadership. With that silliness behind them, she focused on what they had to do.

"Good...now empty your pockets and let's see what we have to work with." It was then that Ginny realized that she was still wearing Harry's robe. She knew from personal experience that it was made out of Basilisk skin, so she was pretty sure that it would repel most curses. Not, that she wanted to test that theory anytime soon. Harry had been full of surprises today and she hoped his robe was full of them too. She reached into the side pockets and found them empty. She let out a disappointed groan, then she remembered how he made his motorbike disappear into the inside layer of his robe the previous night.

She touched the inner coating and it was ice cold and rippled like water. She silently wished for something good to defend them with, as she plunged her hand into the unknown. Fred and George stopped what they were doing as they watched Ginny's hand and then half her arm disappear into the lining of the robe. The robe itself looked as if she had never touched it. George went so far as to poke the other side of it to be sure.

"Wicked" They both said at the same time. To Ginny it was an odd sensation to say the least. It was ice cold when she first touched it, but now it was only slightly cold. Her arm had a tingling sensation as all the hairs on her forearm stood on end. At first she thought nothing was going to happen and then she felt something cold, round, and metallic in her hand. She pulled her hand out to see a silver ball with a red button on it and a lightning bolt etched onto the side of it.

"What in the bloody..."

"Hell is that?"

"Shock Grenade"

"How do you know?" Asked George

"Haven't the foggiest...just do. What do you lot have?"

The total tally was 7 pouches of instant darkness powder, 5 decoy detonators, 2 portable swamp bombs, and a variety box of shrunken goodies, as George put it.

"Will that swamp fill up the entire room?" Ginny asked as a plan started to form in her head. Fred gave affirming thumbs up. Ginny told them to get move some desks to the far walls and to get on them. As they did that, the sounds of spells hitting the door was getting louder. They were running out of time. As soon as they were safely on the desks, Ginny cast a chameleon charm on her brothers and then lastly herself. Fred and George jaws dropped as their skin and clothes changed to look like what they were standing next to. Their little sister was proving to be a bolt out of the blue.

"Before you ask, no I won't teach you the spell. I don't need the two of you camped out in the Harpies locker room. Fred set off the portable swamp as soon as they come in the room." Ginny couldn't see it, but she was sure they were both pouting.

As if on cue, the door was blasted open and the room was filled with Death Eaters. In all there were ten of them, unfortunately Malfoy was not amongst them. As they started to look for them, Fred set off the portable swamp. Soon Voldemort followers were knee deep in mucky swamp water. Ginny took advantage of their distracted situation to drop the Shock Grenade into the water. The fools had no clue what was about to happen.

Ten seconds later, the water was charged with an enormous amount of electricity. Normally only one or two would have been hit with the blast, but thanks to the water they were all caught in it. Ten death Eaters screamed out as they were cooked alive. If the swamp didn't smelled bad enough before, the stench of overcooked Death Eater was ten times worse.

Ginny dropped the chameleon charm and herself and her brothers. She then transfigured a nearby chair into a broom and zoomed out of the room. She wasn't taking any chances if the water was spill charged with electricity.

"Fred old boy, someone has become all cloak-and-dagger." George said as he transfigured his own broom and mounted it.

"George old chum, I think your right. Gin-Gin has just gotten loads more interesting." Fred added as he mounted a broom as well. They made a secret vow to discover all of their little sister's secrets.

Rookwood wasn't sure what surprised him more. The fact that all the contents in the vault were an illusion or it could have been that he believed it without question. Another thing it could have been was the realism that an elegantly dressed house elf was currently standing in front of him. Truth be told it was that the arrogant little thing hade the audacity to look him in the eye, as if he was equal to him.

"Lord Potter wished me to congratulate you for getting past his wards. He also wants me to thank you for leading us to the horcrux. It will speed things along nicely." Duncan said in a most articulate and refined voice.

"You dare speak to me you little rodent?" Augustus hissed at the house elf. All the while his team was circling the small creature. Duncan showed no signs that he was distressed by this. This was when he was going to break from the plan his master had decided on. Master Harry never gave him a direct order to follow the plan to the letter, so he saw no reason that he couldn't alter it. That was what he was telling himself anyway.

He was just supposed to give them the jack-in-the-box and leave. His master's message was inside and the gift would take care of the rest. Duncan felt that a personal touch was needed, and he had waited for so long to say such things to these wizarding vermin.

With a snap of his fingers, he summoned a small table. On it was a pair of reading glasses and a cup, along with a scratch of parchment.

"If you will please indulge the eccentricities of my Master for just a few more seconds; he was very specific on how he wanted this done." The old house elf lied as he put on the reading glasses and took a healthy drink from the cup. No one seemed to notice the liquid was green. After he picked up the parchment and cleared his throat. It was then that Duncan addressed the Death Eaters.

"My master wanted me to read this word for word. Ahem...Roses are red, Violets are blue, You inbreed, backward ass, baby raping collection of fuck stains killed my father so...FUCK YOU!" All the

Death Eaters were in shock that a house elf would dare speak to them in such a manner. Duncan took the opportunity to activate Harry's gift. The jack-in-the-box played a child's tune and they all seemed mesmerized by it. Duncan refused to close his eyes. He wanted to see the look on their faces as death claimed them. Next it sprung open, and instead of a clown popping out, it was an eye of a basilisk. It spun in the air as it hovered for a few seconds. Its death gaze was reflecting off the mirrored walls, so none of them would be robbed of its deadly beauty.

Augustus Rookwood stared in the perfectly preserved eye of the monster they had let loose to begin with. Talk about irony. He was the first to fall. Three others saw it directly and the mirrored walls took care of the remaining five.

"Flawless Victory." Duncan said as he calmly walked over to the eye and watched as the yellow turned gray. Its deadly power was gone forever. It was a shame that it was a onetime use. It would have been a valuable weapon against their enemy. He knew that his mate would be very happy that the improved Mandrake potion that Lady Lily and Mr. Slughorn perfected worked. He stood over the corpse of Augustus Rookwood and smiled.

"Master James sends his regards." He taunted as he kicked him for extra measure. He then looked over at the petrified others. His smile was gone and his eyes held more malice that was thought capable of one of his kind. With a wave of his hand the petrified ones were shattered to dust.

"That was from Master Charles."

A/N: Sorry it took so long to update. I've been trying to update every two weeks. As you've read, the good guys have drawn first blood. The Battle of Gringotts had begun. There was more information I needed to get out, so it was a slow start. Trust me, there is a method to my madness. You'll get plenty of action in the next chapter.

I want to thank you all for the wonderful reviews that were sent, and welcome back Nymphadora. I've missed your encouraging reviews.

Ginny knew they would have to ditch the brooms fast. She couldn't fathom how the first Witches and Wizards were able to fly on just simple brooms. They were slow as sin, and couldn't maneuver for shite, plus it was drawing heavily on her magic just to stay a few feet off the ground. Notwithstanding, it did serve its purpose. They were safely out of the room and Team Weasley did manage to take ten of those bastards in the process. So suck on that Dumbledore!

"Wicked trick Gin-Gin." George told Ginny as he landed next to her.

"Yes, do tell us how you learned that one?" Fred asked as he landed on the other side of her.

"You pick up a few tricks as McGonagall's Aid. She is a Transfiguration Master after all." Ginny told them as she peeked around the corner. After seeing that it was safe, she headed down it with the twins on either side of her. They may have been following her orders, but that didn't seem to stop them from being protective big brothers. It was sweet...annoying...but sweet.

"I think we should make for the Main Entrance."

"Works for us" Fred and George said at the same time.

"Keep the darkness powder in your hands. We don't know how many of those bastards there are out there. It would be best to avoid a fight if we can."

"Since when did Ginny Weasley..."

"Ever run from a fight?"

"You shouldn't ask questions you don't want to hear the answer to," She told them with bitterness in her voice. They instantly knew she was referring to the time she was taken captive by Lestrangle. Malfoy had mentioned he wanted to present her to Voldemort.

George looked over Ginny's head at Fred. He gave him an affirming nod. Whatever they wanted with their little sister, Fred and George would die before they would let that happen to her. The three continued down the long hall. Ginny was grateful that they didn't try and pry anymore information out of her. That was a conversation she wanted to avoid at all costs.

Tonks was one of the first Aurors to arrive at Diagon Alley. She was told to respond to a disturbance. From the sheer amount of patronuses that were sent to the Ministry, it was most likely Death Eaters causing some property damage as a show of force, or in response to what her cousin did the day before.

In the past, she remembered that Death Eaters usually apparated or portkeyed away as soon as the Aurors arrived. She expected this to be over quickly. When she got there she knew that was never going to happen. Someone had put up an anti-apparation ward up. They ended up just outside of the main entry way. People were running out of The Leaky Cauldron in hordes. Mothers were clutching their babies to their breasts as they ran for their lives. Some people were getting trampled in the process. For lack of a better word, it was a mass hysteria.

Tonks knew there was no way she and her fellow Aurors were getting in that way. Nevertheless, that wasn't the only way in. A secondary entrance they used brought them out by Flourish & Blott's. What they saw was something out of a bad B rated muggle movie. Sewer Trolls were climbing out of a huge hole that was in the middle of the road. They were going up and down the street attacking anything that moved. In the sky above, Gargoyles were swooping down from roof tops to snatch up victims. On the steps of Gringotts was a large platoon of Orcs ready to kill anything that tried to leave or enter the bank. The Dark Mark loomed in the blackened sky above.

Acting on instinct, Tonks sent a cutting curse at a Gargoyle. Upon being hit, the dark creature let go of his would-be meal and took to a nearby roof top. The small boy that it was trying to claim fell from twenty feet up. Tonks ran for him as one of her fellow Aurors gently levitated him to the ground.

The rescue didn't go unnoticed. A group of Orcs charged them. They were wielding arcane looking axes that were already stained with blood. They were wearing very little body armor, not that they needed any. Like Giants their hide was very resistant to most spells.

An Auror by the name of Hodister found that out the hard way. He charged them head on, firing curse after curse, only to have then

have very little affect on the dark creatures. He was hit with an axe and Tonks watched as his body was sent flying ten feet into the air. The top half of him that was severed from hip to shoulder crashed through someone's second floor window. His bottom half landed twenty feet in front of her. The poor child puked on the spot.

"Alright you ugly arse son-of-a-bitches...let's dance!" Tonks screamed as she stepped in front of the little boy.

Harry should have been portkeyed straight to his vault. He was repelled by some unseen force and deposited in the middle of Diagon Alley. There could be only be one explanation for that happening. Gringotts was on lockdown, and Ginny was locked in there with Buttheads Bootlickers. Fear, panic and a cold fury filled him up. He had just figured out who she was. It was like Lestrangle Manor all over again. Only this time she wasn't some stranger that he didn't know.

This was the girl that was constantly in his thoughts for over a year. She had opened his eyes to so much in the short time they were together. Even if he was ordered by his mum to stay in panther form, he understood everything she had said to him. She would talk for hours and he would listen to every word. Sometimes it was light and humorous, like when she chattered on about her family and the things they would do to each other. Other times it would be dark and full of pain. He would try to comfort her the best he could. As a panther, his options were kind of limited, yet she often fell asleep on him after a good cry, not that he minded all that much. Every day he grew more and more protective of her. At least that was what he thought it was at the time.

But she was Ginny...Ginny was her, it was all so confusing. He was drawn to Ginny from the first moment he caught her looking at him at the feast, even more so as they walked to the Gryffindor common room. Yet, in the back of his mind he felt he was betraying her, which was crazy because he had only known her for a week. Hell, she didn't even know he was human. Which didn't even matter since she was Ginny...Ginny was her.

"Oh hell! I'm going to end up in a clock tower somewhere!" Get your head out of you arse and focus Potter! She's in there...you're out here! Now go thrash some of those fuck stains and get her back!

After Harry successfully removed his head from his neither regions, he looked at what separated him from Ginny. Six or seven Sewer Trolls were in the street smashing stores or attacking witches trying to get their children to safety. Beyond that there was about thirty Orc's guarding the entrance to Gringotts. Since they were the mortal enemy of Goblins, he was sure they were on Team Ass Wipe. From the roof tops Gargoyles were throwing large stones at anything that moved, or swooping down to get their dinner. In the middle of all that was Tonks. She was the only Auror left standing, and had a little boy glued to her leg as she fought one ugly ass Orc.

"Duncan!" Harry yelled. The house elf didn't appear as he always did, so he yelled again. This time he heard his voice in his head.

Yes Master?

Where are you?

I'm trapped inside Gringotts Master. Even my magic can't break the wards the Goblins have set up.

What's the situation in there?

I have disposed of the thieving vermin and sent the memory to Lady Lily.

Find Griphook. I need to get in there. Then find Ginny, obey her every command, and protect her at all costs. As Lord Potter I formally remove you of all restrictions on your magic.

As you wish, my Lord.

Harry was grateful that he went through the bonding ritual with him, or he would never have been able to contact him.

"YOU BASTARDS WANT BLOOD! WELL, YOU GOT IT! I'LL GIVE YOU BLOOD...BLOOD LIKE A RIVER!" With that Harry charged into the thick of it.

Narcissa stepped out of the fireplace in Lily's office to see her comforting her house elf. When Lily looked into her friend's eyes she

knew thing have gone from bad to worse. Narcissa was in full Marauder Battle Robes. The crimson red robes had enchantments of protection, as well as the same lining as Harry's trench coat so they could travel light, yet still have a heavy arsenal of objects at the ready.

"It's begun," was all Narcissa said, but it spoke volumes. With a wave of her wand, Lily's disillusioned trunk that was in a corner flew open. She removed her Battle Robes and changed into them.

"Where?"

"Diagon Alley"

"Harry's there!"

"He was at Moony's office, but then a patronus came and he pulled a Jimmy."

"I swear that boy is going to give me gray hair."

"What about your class?"

"I'll just cancel it."

"Dumbledore is delusional, but not an idiot Lily. We need to keep him in the dark as long as we can." Narcissa said as she donned the mask of an owl. Lily bowed her head and acknowledged her friend's wisdom.

"Vonda pull yourself together, I need you to make yourself look like me and teach my class."

"Yes Mistress."

While Lily was getting filled in on what was going on, Sirius was visited by Remus. A few minutes later Kreacher, under the disguise of his master, was teaching his class. Well more like faking a stomach cramp and dismissing the class early. Once Lady Malfoy had come to live at Grimmauld Place, his demeanor had improved greatly. With the help of Narcissa he and Sirius seemed to have put their shaky past behind them.

"The Dark Mark was been spotted over Diagon Alley Madame Bones!" Amelia's assistant screamed as she busted into her office. She was in a private meeting with the Minister of Magic at the time. Both jumped to their feet as their Auror training kick in.

"We sent a team to check out reports of a disturbance not that long ago. Have they reported in yet?" Amelia snapped at Alice.

"No Madame Bones. They missed their scheduled check in," She answered in a squeaky voice, as she looked from her boss to the Minister, and then back to Amelia. Both of them cursed to themselves. It was standard operating procedure to always check in after responding to a disturbance. It was doubly vital now that they were in the middle of a war. If they broke protocol it meant they were engaged in battle or already dead.

"Most of my Aurors and Hit-Wizards are tied up with the shakedown. Should we call on Dumbledore's Order for help?" Amelia asked Scrimgeour.

"He would just love to hold over my head. No, its time he learned that he's not the only flavor in the ice-cream parlor. It's time to see just what the Marauders can do." Amelia couldn't agree more. After what she had heard today about the man, the last thing she wanted to do was owe Dumbledore a favor. She had only suggested it out of the urgency of the situation. She turned to her assistant.

"Call all available personnel to go to Diagon Alley. I will be going there myself to oversee it."

"I will be going as well. The people need to see that I'm willing to put my life on the line."

"Miss the action...don't you?"

"A bit."

"EXPECTO PATROMUM ELEMENTIA!" Harry yelled loudly so any witch or wizard in ear shot would hear the spell. He could have easily done it wordlessly, but he was hoping someone would follow his example and start fighting back against these filthy creatures.

The form of a great stag leaped out of his wand, but instead of it being silver. The stag was made of flames. The heat that was coming off of the elemental patronus was immense. Many of the cowering patrons of Diagon Alley stopped what they were doing, whether it was hiding or fleeing, they stopped to stare in wonder at the magnificent beast.

"Drive those Trolls back into the sewers where they belong!" Harry ordered his elemental before turning his attention to the onlookers.

"Use righteous anger, not a happy thought. WELL JUST DON'T STAND THERE WITH YOUR WANDS UP YOUR ARSES! FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT TO LIVE! FIGHT FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO LIVE!" He screamed at them, when they just looked dumbfounded at him.

A mother that was covering her child with her body was the first to take up Harry's Call to Arms. She had lived her life as a Slytherin, but on this day she found her inner Gryffindor. The angelic face of the blond Witch looked back at her child and found her righteous anger.

"Stay put sweetheart. Mummy has some vermin to crush under her heel." She spoke so sweetly to her little girl that it almost seemed childlike, and then she turned to the face her enemy. Her face held the rage that only a mother protecting her child could make. She repeated the spell that Harry had just said with everything she had. A fiery Grim jumped out of her wand and attacked the nearest Troll. This was followed by a goat, eagle, badger, and cat. Though they were much smaller than the Troll, they attacked the monster ferociously. It would throw one off, only to be attacked by three more.

Harry winked at the little girl and then changed into Shadow. He then charged down the road towards Tonks.

In every hallway that Ginny, Fred, and George took, they would find the body of a dead Goblin. Some were in business suits, while others were in armor. For the most part they were killed by severing curses. Goblin blood was all over the floors, as well as the walls. They had only come across two or three dead Death Eaters. It looked like they weren't going down without a fight.

"COME HUMAN! COME AND DIE! I WILL AVENGE MY PEOPLE WITH YOUR BLOOD!" Was heard screaming coming from the lobby at the end of the hall. Ginny recognized the voice immediately. Without thinking she ran full out to get to her new friend with her brothers following close behind. As they rounded the corner Ginny saw Hesta standing over a dead Death Eater. Another Goblin was curled up in the fetal position on the floor not far away. He looked to be recovering from the Cruciatus curse. Three Death Eaters were trying to circle around her.

Fred ran forward as one of the Death Eaters sent a killing curse at Hesta's back. He tackled her out of the way. Her training took over as she saw him as a new threat. She twisted her body so she could use full advantage of the momentum. She came to rest sitting on Fred's collarbone with his arms pinned under the weight of her legs. Hesta brought her dagger to Fred's jugular. If it wasn't for his red hair she wouldn't have stopped.

"Mummafacashus!" Ginny screamed out. She was grateful that she was able to convince Harry to teach her the hex before they left Hogwarts. The Death Eater that had fired the killing curse robes started to wrap him up in a tight cocoon. The more he struggled against it the tighter it wrapped him. He must have been claustrophobic, because he started to flail around in desperation. He looked like a fish out of water.

George hit one of the other Death Eaters with a reductor in the chest, and the man flew across the room and into the wall. Well, parts of him anyway. The last Death Eater cast a cutting curse at Ginny, which she had to dive to get out of its way. Hesta leapt off a very stunned Fred and charged the Death Eater. She was knocked back by a reducto. Luckily her armor took the blunt of it. Oddly enough she landed right back on top of Fred.

"Luv we have gotta stop meeting like this." Fred squeaked out as soon as he got his breath back.

"Avada Kadavra!"

The little boy that just wouldn't let go of Tonks leg was a huge encumbrance in the battle. They had only been able to take down two Orcs and that was with seven highly trained Aurors. Now she

was down to just herself. Most of their best spells hardly had any affect at all. Their hide was just too thick. She guessed that was why they were wearing so little armor. What she would have given for a muggle gun right about now. No matter how many times she told the little boy to run, he just wouldn't let go of her leg. Tonks started to fear for the life of her own unborn child that resided in her womb. She knew that it was a matter of seconds before both their lives were going to come to a violent end.

Three Orcs were charging her, all wielding huge battle axes. One from the front and the other two were flanking her from either side. She breathed what she thought was her last breath. Then she heard one of the sweetest sounds she ever heard. Shadow's roar even made the Orcs jump a bit. Her three attackers stopped to find the source of the sound. They didn't have to wait very long. Tonks grinned ear to ear.

"You're gonna get it." She teased them. From the shadow between her legs, a black panther leapt out. Apparently that was all the motivation required to make the boy run away. Shadow and the lead Orc charged each other. Ten feet from his quarry Harry leapt into the air and transformed into his Hybrid form. Since Lestrangle Manor, Harry had trained heavily in this mode. Next time he had to face Greyback he would be ready. Even in Werewolf form Remus was no match for him. A fact that these Orcs were about to find out.

Shadow slashed at the Orc's face, and his claw dug under its jaw. Using his momentum and raw strength Harry ripped most of its face off in the process. Harry landed and his tail picked up the dead Orc's axe. The other two came at him at the same time from opposite sides. He turned to face one leaving his back exposed to the other. At the last second he pivoted and changed direction. He stopped the downward swing of the Orc's axe cold as he opened his other claw just two inches from the beast's face. At the same time, the axe in his tail cut laterally across the other Orc's gut. One thing is always guaranteed to happen when an Orc gets hit with a wandless Bombarda at point blank range...it makes a mess...a really big...enormous...titanic...colossal freakin' mess.

The Orc behind Harry was hurt but not out by any means. In a rage, it brought its axe down on Harry with all its strength, in the hopes of cutting him in half. Harry sank down into his own shadow, missing getting severed by only inches. Using his enemy's shadow, Harry

rose up silently behind the Orc. He reached around and sunk his claws into its shoulder and jaw. With a mighty pull and a loud crack, another Orc went down.

"Not that I'm complaining Shadow, but aren't you supposed to be in school or something?"

Shadow turned around to see that Tonks had transformed into the Hybrid form of her fox animagus. Since Harry had come out of the closet so to speak and she was the only Auror left, Tonks saw no reason not to use this form. She didn't have Harry's strength or shadow power, but she made up for it with speed and agility.

"Nice tail Nymphy." Shadow said as he picked up an axe and transfigured it into a Katana. Tonks put a paw to her chest and acted crushed. Her metamorphic abilities allowed her to take a more feminine shape. She spun around so Harry could see all her luscious curves.

"All of this and all you could come up with is nice tail? You're slipping Potter."

"If you showed me this yesterday I would have defiantly put it in the spank bank." Harry turned to look at Gringotts and the twenty-five Orcs that stood between him and his goal. "However, things have changed. Ginny's in there and I'm not going to let them take her again. She's more important to me than my damn secrets."

"Figured it out did you?" Tonks said as she stepped next to him and looked on as the Orcs started to form a large circle around them. Harry handed her the Katana. She was amazed that he was able to get the weight and balance right as she took a few test strikes on one of the dead Orcs. It cut its hide like it was hot butter. It was light weapon, but incredibly strong and razor sharp, just like her. A wand was almost worthless against them. A sword, now that could be fun.

Harry and Tonks stood back to back as the circle of Orcs slowly got tighter and tighter. Harry let out a roar. This time they roared back at Harry.

"You ready to go all Kill Bill on these wankers Shadow?"

"I was thinking more like 300 Nymphy."

"They died in 300."

"Kill Bill it is."

A?N: I know the movies probably don't jive with the time line, but it just fit. Harry got Tonks hooked on muggle movies just so you know. I didn't put it in the story, because it would have stopped the flow. I know that this chapter jumped around a lot. There are several things happening at the same time.

Now I have gotten a lot of requests to do a one shot on Harry and what happened at the succubus colony. If I do, I'll post it in Harry/OC and let you know in my A/N. I hope you liked the chapter and as always let me know what you think.

Everything happened so fast and yet so slow that Ginny wasn't sure if it was a real or a dream. Around her things were a blur, while her every movement was slow and sluggish. It was worse than her nightmares of the Chamber or when she was tied to that cruel altar, where she was helpless against anything that happened to her. Now she could move...she could fight against it. Yet her body moved as if it was five steps behind everything else. Fate was laughing at her. Bitch!

Ginny heard the killing curse being shouted. She looked up to see the green curse erupt out of the end of the Death Eaters wand. She could hear her heart beating in her chest as if it was thunder. She looked to her brothers to see Fred grab Hestia and roll on top of her in an attempt to protect the Warrior Goblin. George grabbed Ginny in a huge hug and spun her around so that he was between her and the curse.

"NOOOOO!" Ginny screamed at George, but it sounded oddly off and drawn out. She struggled to break free, but her brother was having none of that. He held her tight. The thought that the Basilisk skin of Harry's robe could stop the curse filled her head. It was a long shot...no, she knew it wouldn't work. She didn't care. It was better than watching her brother die. She was the one they were after.

"Gin-Gin" Was all George said and it stopped her cold. Her pet name left his lips so tranquilly that it didn't seem like George at all. She looked up into his eyes and saw a calm determined resolve. He looked at her with all the love a brother could give. He had no regrets; it showed all over his striking face. She wasn't sure if she could bear to see the life leave his eyes, but she had to show George all the love she had for him in her own eyes. It was all that they truly had left.

The light of the curse was getting brighter and brighter, as it came to claim George's life. Then Fate chose that second to prove she wasn't a heartless bitch after all. A huge unseen force hit them from the side with such power that they all slammed against the far wall.

The Death Eater swore as his dark curse just missed its prey, only to be followed by a scream of pure agony. Ginny wasn't sure what just happened, but she wasn't about to start being thorny about it.

She didn't know what was making the Death Eater scream bloody murder, and quite frankly, she really didn't care. Git's got it coming.

The Death Eater's arms and legs slammed together as he started to rise off the floor. The sound of cracking bones intermixed with his screams. At first none of them saw the small figure that stood behind him. It was hidden in the shadows. As their savior stepped out into the light, Ginny let out a sigh of relief. Duncan gave her an affirming nod to which she mouthed thank you. He then turned his attention to the Death Eater. Duncan brought the hand of his outreached arm into a fist and every bone in the Death Eaters body exploded inward. The Death Eater's head dropped into his chest. Then there was only silence. With a flick of his wrist, Duncan sent the scum flying down the hall.

"Bloody Hell," Fred and George said simultaneously. Ginny and Hesta nodded their heads in agreement. After the shock of the moment wore off, George was assaulted by a myriad of hits by Ginny.

"You...stupid...overprotective...git...if...you...ever...do...that...again...I'll...I'll..." Each word came with a hit so her point would sink into his thick head. She didn't like that her voice was cracking with overwhelming emotion, but there was little she could do about it now. George was swiftly levitated off the floor and away from Ginny's assault by Duncan.

"Is this human distressing you Mistress Ginny?" It took a few seconds for Ginny to get her emotions under control. She still wanted to hit him a few more times. She chose instead to take a long breath and then answered Duncan.

"Every day of my life, but I love him anyway. Duncan...George, George...Duncan." George gave him a cheeky wave from above. This made everyone laugh, even Duncan.

"Wait a who, did you just call me Mistress?"

"Yes you heard me correctly Mistress Ginny. Master Harry sent me to protect you until he can arrive. He also gave me strict orders to follow your commands, so technically than makes you my Mistress until he says otherwise."

"Would this Harry be the one with the sexy arse that you mentioned earlier?"

"Shut it Fred! See this is the kind of shite I have to put up with," Ginny told Duncan.

"I see," He answered stiffly.

"Where's Harry?"

"At this moment he is on the steps of Gringotts fighting Orcs with his Aunt...Nympy."

"ORCS!" All of them yelled in unison. Ginny's legs gave in and she crumbled to the floor. All the worst scenarios came to mind. Bloody Orcs! Wait Orcs not Orc...as in plural!

"How many?" Ginny asked, not really wanting to know the answer, but needing to know none the less.

"There were thirty at first, but now only nineteen remain...no, make that eighteen. Nicely played Master Harry." Duncan said with admiration at the end. Through the link he had with his Master, he was able to keep tabs on him mentally. He informed Harry that he had found Ginny and that she was for the moment safe.

"Master Harry suggests that I take you to the Potter Vault. It is heavily protected and the perfect place to wait until Gringotts comes off lockdown."

"I'm not letting him face Orcs alone!" Ginny jumped to her feet. Her blazing determination was practically radiating off of her.

"One, he is most certainly not alone. His aunt is a very accomplished Auror. Two, his fellow Marauders are on their way, and three, until the Orcs' threat has been neutralized the Director of Gringotts will not let anyone in or out."

She was terrified for Harry. She wished she would have given him back his robe, at least then he would have had its protection. She knew the smart thing would be to go to the vault, but she just couldn't just sit on her arse and do nothing. She just wasn't built that way, plus she would end up pulling her hair out worrying about him.

"Wait did you just say Potter...as in Lord Harry Potter?" George asked. He quickly reached into his robes and pulled out his copy of the Daily Prophet, and shoved it out so Ginny could see the front page. She saw the picture of Harry and Professor Black fighting back to back against Bellatrix Lestrange and some Death Eaters.

"This bloke?" George asked. Ginny snatched the paper out of his hands and started to read the article with a vengeance. While she was doing that, Hesta stood up and looked hard at Fred. It made him feel a little uncomfortable to say the least.

"Fred is it?" He nodded at her and she smiled. "Twice now you have put your life in danger to save mine."

"No prob-"Fred was cut off as she grabbed his head in her hands, pulled him to her, and kissed him passionately. At first his eyes widened to the point that they looked as if they would pop out at any second. Then they rolled to the back of his head before he closed them. Hesta pulled back and brought one hand down to his crotch and gave him a little squeeze.

"Adequate," She said with a devilish grin in response to his size. "If you survive this day I will bed you." Hesta then walked off leaving a dazed and confused Fred Weasley.

"So mate...how was it?" George asked, barely holding down his laughter.

"She...she has a very long tongue," Was all Fred said, but it was enough to send George into a laughing fit. "It's not funny. I think she was serious."

"You know what they say. Once you go green you never go back," George laughed out more than said. That earned him a hit in the back of the head from Ginny. Git

Hesta was standing over the last remaining Death Eater. She kneeled down and whispered something at him. Whatever it was made him tremble in fear. She looked over at Fred and winked before she snapped the Death Eaters neck. The sound made everyone that was watching jump a little.

"Fred old boy...your new girlfriend is scary." Once again Ginny smacked him in the back of his head.

"Will you bloody stop hitting me!" Ginny rolled her eyes at him then she turned to Duncan. She looked down at the paper and then back to Duncan with an intense look in her eyes. Everything clicked into place in her mind. She cursed herself for not figuring it out sooner. She should have known the first time she looked into his eyes. I'm such a bloody idiot.

Ginny was about to ask a question when she saw something long and silvery coming at them from across the floor. She leapt to her feet and aimed her wand at it. Her brother's wands, Hesta's sword and Duncan's outreached hand followed quickly

A ten-foot patronus in the form of a King Cobra slithered up to them. It stopped just short of them and reared its head. When it opened its mouth, Ginny noticed something dangling from one of its fangs.

"I must say that you are proving to be quite a little nuisance Miss Weasley. I look forward to cursing some proper manners into you. Now I hate to repeat myself, but you will come along like a good little girl and take you long overdue medicine. If you refuse to obey my orders...well, Greyback is just itching to have a go at your brother's pretty little face. You have twenty minutes to get yourself to the main lobby, not one second more." The voice of Lucius Malfoy erupted from it mouth. It dropped what was in its mouth at Ginny's feet and disappeared into nothing.

Ginny bent down and picked it up. She had to cover her mouth with her hand to keep from screaming out. In her hand was one of the earrings that she had made for her brother Bill. The end of it had blood on it, most likely from being ripped out of his ear.

"Ginny don't you..."

"Think about it..."

"Bill would rather die..."

"Then have them..."

"Hurt you again."

Ginny just kept looking at Bill's earring. At first, the twins thought that maybe she hadn't heard them. Then she stepped forward a few feet and looked back at them.

"The thing is...they won't kill him. He'll be Greyback's new chew toy, and take it from someone whose has seen how cruel those monsters can be...there are somethings that are worse than death. I'm sorry, but I just can't live with that."

"That's not the only problem," Duncan informed them.

"Oh, you mean it gets worse?" Fred asked sarcastically.

"The only one that can reopen Gringotts is Director Ragnok. He was taken prisoner by the Death Eaters. Thankfully he is in disguise and they, as of the moment, don't know which one he is. I was intending to attempt a rescue after I had secured Mistress Ginny in the Potter vault."

"Well...now you have backup." Ginny said with the most wicked of grins.

"Shadow, it's time to use that Dark Mark to our advantage!" Tonks yelled as she sidestepped an axe and countered with a lateral slash that severed a major artery of the Orc she was fighting.

"Keep them off of me for a sec will ya!" Harry fired back as he snapped the neck of the Orc he was fighting. He knew that the rest of the Marauders were on their way by now. Thanks to all the excellent Intel on the Death Eaters by Narcissa. He knew that the Dark Mark that hovered in the blackened sky above served as a back door to come and go even if anti-apparation and portkey charms were casted, you just needed to know where to aim. Harry drew in his magic as Tonks cast a spell that created a wall of stone around them. It wouldn't hold the Orcs off for long, but it would buy them the time they needed.

"Damn these wankers are persistent," Tonks said as she bent over to catch her breath. Harry shot his hand up at the Dark Mark and cast a charm of his mum's design with his own little twist to it. The charm was turquoise in color as it bulleted at its target.

"Yo-ho-ho" Harry started, to which Tonks finished with, "And a bottle of rum."

The charm hit the Dark Mark and the sky immediately brightened up. This seemed to catch the attention all the dark creatures that were fighting. It was a good thing too, because the Orcs had just broken through Tonks' wall. A jagged chunk of the wall the size of a fist almost hit Harry in the head, if it wasn't for Tonks' quick reflexes. Harry took it from her and threw it back at one of the Orcs with enough force to split his thick head.

"Thanks Darlin'."

"Anytime luv." Tonks answered with a smack to Harry's bum.

"Tease."

"You know it," She added with a wink.

What happened next would make Calvin Meeks a very rich man, for he was the one who actually got a picture of it. In the sky above, two white clouds formed a shape of a sword and launched at the skull in the sky. Both pierced the Dark Mark at the same time. The snake that was coming out its mouth collapsed and hung from the open mouth of the skull. The crisscross pattern of the swords in the skull, left what would forever be known from that day forward in the Wizarding World as the Marauder's Mark.

Then all over Diagon Alley, cloaked figures appeared. All of them had crimson robes and masks with the face of an animal. The first to appear in the streets was a wolf and dog. They were followed by a lioness, owl, hawk, and lastly a bear. The owl landed on a rooftop and immediately started to give the others Intel from the muggle headsets they all had.

"Alright people, we have Trolls from Fortescue's to Ollivander's. Gargoyles all over the place and Orcs are on the steps of Gringotts. They are all very resistant to magic. If you're going to use magic, make it nasty. Trolls regenerate fast, but are weak against and are fearful of fire."

"Where is my son Talon?"

"Where do you think Pride? Don't worry, Trickster's got his back, and it seems that she has perfected her hybrid form...cute tail."

"I swear those two just feed off each other."

"I see a huge hole in the street down Knockturn Alley. Those bloody Trolls are dragging children down into it!" Narcissa knew from some of the stories that Lucius would tell her that the children that were Pureblood would be returned to their parents in exchange for gold or favors. The half-bloods would be used as slaves or experimented on. The muggle-borns? They were used as training dummies or worse. She never had the heart to tell her best friend any of that, but she had the feeling Lily already knew, which was confirmed by Lily's reaction.

"NOT ON MY BLOODY WATCH!" Lily screamed out. She wasn't sure if it was her surrendering to her Animagus's true nature, or the mother in her that had overridden her moral sensibilities. All Lily knew was that she transformed into a Lioness and pounced on the nearest Troll. She bit down on its neck and ripped out most of the beast's throat, thus breaking what she swore to herself she would never do. Her soul be damned or not, they would not have the children.

"Padfoot, I don't know what to do about the Gargoyles? Will a binding spell work on their wings?"

"Not for very long, fear not cousin. I called in a favor. Trust me; they will never know what hit them," Sirius said as he reached into his robes and pulled out a Claymore Broadsword with the Black Family Crest on it. Orion Black had replaced the hilt of his Family Sword with one carved oddly enough out of a Black Dragon fang. The benefits of having a sword with a hilt made out of a magical creature is that the wielder could focus magic through it. Sirius let his magic flow into the sword and then with just a thought the blade was engulfed in a blue flame.

Sirius looked over at Remus and saw that he had the sword that he had commissioned the Dwarves to make him. They were the best at weapon crafting after all. Its blade had a green flame radiating from it. The childhood friends gave each other affirming nods and then attacked the nearest Troll.

"Dobby!"

"Yes Mistress?" Dobby knew better that call her by her name when they were in battle.

"The battle line has been drawn at Madam Malkin's. From there to the Leaky Cauldron is a safe zone. Evacuate any children or wounded to there. Do not engage the enemy."

"Yes Mistress!" Dobby popped away and did as Narcissa told him. She couldn't believe that the people were fighting back. Elemental Patronus's had driven back the trolls quite effectively.

Lily leapt onto the back of another Troll that had a child and bit into the back of its neck. With a head jerk the foul creature's neck snapped like a twig. She launched herself off it before it hit the ground and onto another Troll. Before she could maul the beast, she was grabbed by the tail and was thrown against a building wall. She crumbled to the street and reverted back to her human form. She tried to push away the dizziness and get to her feet. She felt two ribs crack as she was kicked to the other side of the street by one of the Trolls. If it wasn't for the pain she was sure she would have passed out. She looked up to see the Troll marching towards her.

A large snow owl swooped down and started pecking and clawing at the beast's eyes with her beak and talons. Narcissa was desperate to buy her best friend the time she needed to get out of there. Lily's vision was too blurry to even see straight. She heard more than saw an owl slam against the wall she was using for support to stand. Narcissa too reverted back to her original state.

"I'm sorry...I wasn't fast enough." Talon whispered to Pride, as she crawled to her. Lily dropped to the ground next to her friend. The Troll was advancing on them with a look of butchery in its cold black eyes.

A roar rang out that was so loud that the windows of a nearby store rattled. The Troll turned to see where it came from and was hit with a flying Orc axe that was buried to the hilt in its chest. The creature itself was thrown ten feet down the street from the force of the hit.

"Damn! He was fighting two Orcs when he threw that," Narcissa said, shaking her head in disbelief.

"That's my boy," Lily said with pride as she reached into her robe and pulled out a healing potion. She chugged it, then helped Talon to her feet. "Now you get your bum back on that roof."

"And you better start fighting with your head," Narcissa scolded her as she put the tip of her wand to Lily's broken ribs. She winced for a second and then the pain was gone. Narcissa apparated away.

"Yes mum," Lily answered as she pulled her custom-made staff. She let her magic flow into it and the ends burst into flames. She jumped down the hole that the Trolls were using to escape. She was getting those children back no matter what the cost.

"I'm telling you that after what Bellatrix did to her, the girl would be daft to surrender herself to us," Greyback told Lucius as he sniffed the alluring French girl. Bill Weasley was struggling against the magical ropes that held him in place.

"What did that bitch do to my sister?" Bill yelled and got kicked in the gut by Lucius for his trouble.

"You should be more concerned with what Fenrir here is going to do to that lovely little French whore, than what Bella did to that annoying little twit you call a sister," Malfoy sneered at the oldest Weasley. He then addressed his fellow Death Eater. "To answer your question, yes she will come. These blood traitors think differently than us. It must be a Gryffindor thing."

Ginny entered the lobby and saw that all the hostages were clumped together. They had the Goblins mixed in with the patrons of Gringotts. Seven to eight Death Eaters had them surrounded. Bill was on his knees in front of the werewolf. Thankfully, it was daytime so he wasn't in his cursed form, but she saw that his hands more resembled claws than anything human. They were already covered in blood. It was quite repulsive. As if he could read her mind, Greyback sucked on one of his fingers and smiled at her. Ginny pushed down the urge to vomit.

It looked as if he had started early on Bill. One of his eyes was swollen shut and his nose looked to be broken. Even with the beating he had taken, her oldest brother still managed to give her a smile. She swallowed hard when she saw his one good eye pleading with her to run away.

"On your knees human," It wasn't until Ginny obeyed the order that Lucius saw the Goblin Warrior standing behind her. One of the Death Eaters threw a curse at her, to which she leapt behind Ginny and put her dagger to the youngest Weasley's throat.

"Free my people and I will let you have your toy human, refuse and your Master losses his prize."

"Leave her alone you bitch!" Bill yelled at the Goblin.

"Shut up!" Greyback yelled as he kicked Bill in the back of the head. His face smashed hard on the cold floor. A puddle of blood instantly formed around his head. Fleur broke free of the group of hostages and threw her body over Bill in a vain attempt to protect him.

"Zou are a vile zick excuse of a man!" She spat at Greyback. The man himself seemed to find it very funny.

"Now let's not do anything rash Goblin. I'm not an unreasonable man. I'm sure we can come to a mutually beneficial arrangement," Lucius said as he poured on all his pureblood charm. Hesta was less than impressed.

"There is no negotiation here. There is do or do not. Choose now!"

"How can we know this isn't some trick? She had two of her brothers with her. Where are they?"

"They were trying to hide her in a vault. They died well...for humans."

When the Ministry arrived, they astonished by what they saw. Citizens were fighting the Trolls. Many of the foul beasts lay dead in the street. Elemental Patronus's were bringing them down. It wasn't a very common spell; in fact very few of the more senior Aurors

knew it. That was something that Madam Bones planed on remedying as soon as possible.

As they made their way up the street, house elves were popping in with wounded or children. Apparently others followed Narcissa's example and use their servants as well. Several witches had made an area for the wounded and were treating them best as they could.

"We need Healers here now!" Madam Bones ordered.

In one of the stores, children were being herded. Outside the doorway, a fiery Grim stood sentinel, just daring anyone to come close. The battle line was well past Gringotts by now and was slowly inching it's way to Ollivander's. On the steps of Gringotts two humanoid Beasts were fighting the Orcs. One resembled a panther and the other a fox. Gargoyles were swooping down to aid the Orcs.

One Auror made to hex the creatures, but was stopped by the Minister himself.

"Use your head man! They are fighting the Orcs! That makes them allies. Get to the rooftops and deal with those Gargoyles!" He ordered.

No sooner did he say that then several winged beasts pounced down on the two freedom fighters on Gringotts steps. Harry and Tonks were overwhelmed by the sheer number of them. Soon they were forced down and had their arms and legs pinned down. The three remaining Orcs advanced on them with their axes held high. The Minister and Amelia lead a failed charge to aid them. They too were attacked by an unnaturally large number of Gargoyles.

Harry looked up to see an Orc standing over him. Past the beast's shoulder, in the sky above, more winged creatures descended from the sky. The Orc aimed his axe Harry's head. Before he could meet his target the steps of Gringotts were showered with glowing arrows. Harry and Tonks were buried alive under the dead Orcs and Gargoyles. Oddly, the two were not touched by the arrows. When Harry once again was able to see sky, it was accompanied by the gorgeous face of Sasha Desory. The sultry Succubus helped Harry to his feet, as another helped Tonks to hers. Sasha spreaded her wings and with a few flaps had floated off the ground enough so she

was eye level with Harry. She blew him a kiss and a wink before she ascended into the sky. Her tail tweaked his ear as she left.

"Oh she is never going to let me live that down," Harry said with a grin.

"Fine! Release the Goblins, " Lucius ordered as he dragged Ginny away from Hesta. He pushed her to Greyback. The werewolf wrapped an arm around her and gave her a good sniff.

"You reek of him my pretty."

"She reeks of what?" Lucius asked.

"The Shadow Fiend," Greyback spoke of the beast he faced at Lestrangle Manor. Since that fateful night it had been responsible for the deaths of many of the Dark Lord's servants.

"I thought he was linked to Bella's niece? Well, now isn't this interesting. We reached for a Knut and got a Galleon. I will once again stand proudly in the Inner Circle."

"Just don't forget who helped you get there Malfoy," Greyback growled. Ginny was fighting the urge to panic. Don't think about it...don't think about it...I bloody said don't think about it! You can deal with that later. Just wait for your moment, then strike.

"DUNCAN NOW!" Ginny screamed as the hostages were released from the binding hex.

Duncan popped beside the group of captives. He grabbed the nearest one. Since they were all connected he was able transport the entire group the Potter vault, but it came with a price. Duncan collapsed immediately. The feat took practically all of his magic. Seeing him fall, Griphook ran to Duncan and checked the condition of the house elf. He was still conscious, but barely.

"Orcs...neutralized." Duncan wheezed out before the blackness took him.

High up in the lobby several things happened at once. Darkness surrounded the Death Eaters courtesy of Fred and George. They had slowly been circling them with Darkness Powder under the

Chameleon charm. Fleur pulled out her hidden wand and healed Bill. Once she freed him of the bindings he attacked Malfoy with his bare fists. Lucius was caught off guard by the assault, as Bill broke his nose with the first punch. He followed through with an upper cut to the abdomen. All of the air in Malfoy's lungs was forced out of his body. As he buckled over Bill brought his knee to Lucius's already broken nose. The Death Eater landed on the flat of his back. Bill was on top of him in the twinkling of an eye.

"You...will...never...hurt...my...family...again," Bill yelled with every punch to his face.

Hesta rolled between two Death Eaters. She jumped up on one's knee with her right foot. Then she leapt to the hip of the other Death Eater with her left foot. She finished the attack by jumping up and twisting her body with her sword whistling through the air. She landed a second before their heads' did.

Fred and George were taking full advantage of the Chameleon charm to curse the remaining Death Eaters, until only the werewolf remained. Greyback tightened his grip around Ginny as she struggled to break free. He put his claws to her jugular.

"STOP OR I'LL RIP OUT HER THROAT!"

They all stopped at once. Lucius managed to crawl out from under Bill. Fenrir was impressed that he was still awake after the beating Weasley gave him. True to form, once Malfoy had his wand back in his hand, he used the blasting curse on Bill. He flew into the darkness around them. Fleur went to go after him, but Lucius pulled her back by her hair.

"Not so fast bitch. I'm going to put you to good use." He looked around the room to see if he could see the twins. The only one he could see was the Goblin. She still had her sword in her hand.

"Drop it and back away." He ordered. Hesta dropped her sword to her feet and backed away with her hands up.

"Bombarda!" Chunks of Hesta's armor scattered across the floor as he too went flying into the darkness.

"Alright boys come out and surrender, or watch your brother's whore squeal lick a stuck pig."

"Do you really think..." Lucius pointed his wand to his left.

We'll let you go..." Then he pointed it to his right.

With our sister?" The darkness answered. The sound of the battle outside suddenly echoed through the lobby.

"Time to go Malfoy. Fear not my pet. You will not go to Bella just yet. I will use you to capture that damn panther first."

"Why wait?" Came a question in a language that only Greyback could answer. From the darkness emerged the seven-foot Shadow Fiend covered in Orc blood.

"Do nothing Fred and George! He's friendly. Ginny yelled. Greyback tightened his grip around her throat. Harry roared at him, and smelled the werewolf's fear.

"You've gotten bigger boy."

"You haven't."

"You have me at a disadvantage."

"Well boo-freakady-hoo, sucks to be you."

"I know when to cut my losses kid, but rest assured the next full moon we will finish this."

Greyback and Malfoy threw Ginny and Fleur at Harry and ran for the exit. Once outside the Death Eaters saw the battle was lost. In the sky above Gargoyles were fleeing from Succubus's. Parents were helping their children out of the hole the Trolls came from. Aurors and unknown wizards in crimson robes were circling around them. They quickly activated their portkeys and flashed away.

Inside Ginny was remembering how much she liked the feel of Shadow's fur. Harry had yet to let go of her and she nuzzled in tighter. All other thoughts and worries seemed to fade away.

"You really know how to keep a girl waiting Potter," Ginny teased him as she ran her fingers through his fur. Harry was running his hand through her hair as he reverted back to human.

"I like this color so much better than white," He kidded back, but still refused to let her go. Before she could one up him, Harry brought his mouth down on hers. Ginny easily melted into the kiss, forgetting what she was about to say.

A/N: Well there you go. It's a little late I know, but I wanted to finish the battle. No cliffies. The next chapter will deal with the aftermath of the battle. I know one long day and it isn't even lunch yet. Let me know what you think, and thank you for all the reviews.

"Hey Gin-Gin!" Fred said after clearing his throat for the third time still didn't get their attention. "If you're done snogging your new boyfriend we could use some help finding Bill." He was starting to wonder how they were even breathing. Seeing as just a few moments ago Harry was seven foot tall and covered in black fur with some really wicked looking claws, he figured trying for the over protective big brother route was just plain laughable.

"Yeah, and could you cancel this charm, we keep bumping into each other," George added.

"Brothers?" Harry asked as they broke for air.

"Brothers," Ginny confirmed as she put her forehead against his.

"Why is it I can't keep a pure thought in my head whenever I get close to you?"

"I have a theory, but can we find my brother first?" Ginny reluctantly pulled away. If her Animagus was in heat like she thought, this was going to complicate things...a lot. With a flick of her wrist the twins were visible again. As she looked around she saw that they were still surrounded with darkness powder. She wasn't sure how long it was going to last. She gave a quick sniff, and pointed to George's left.

"He's over there. Can you get this powder to disappear or something?"

"Why waste it?" Harry asked as he reached into his trench coat that Ginny was still wearing and pulled out a large vial. Ginny's breath hitched as he had brushed up against her, but her eyes narrowed when she saw the grin he was sporting. Git did that on purpose. Oh it's on now Potter...it...is...on.

"Accio Darkness Powder," With a wave of his wand, the darkness shot towards him and into the vial. Once it was all clear he sealed it and tossed it to Fred.

"Why didn't we ever think about that?" Fred said as he stowed it in his robe.

"We're going to have to improve the formula now. Can't have those Deathmunchers figuring out that little trick now can we...rep to protect and all." "How did you know what it was called?" George asked suspiciously.

"I believe that my Uncle Moony made a rather large order with you just this morning. Besides I'm a second generation Marauder...I have a rep of my own to protect."

"Wait, Lupin is Moony?" George thought out loud.

"Kind of obvious now that you think about it," Fred said as he hit himself in the forehead.

"Duncan said that your aunt Nymphy was an Auror...You uncle Moony is Lupin...Oh! She is so dead!" Ginny growled.

"I'm fine by the way if anyone cares to know," Bill told them as Fleur helped him up off the floor. His shirt was ripped to shreds where the curse hit him. His bare chest that Fleur was admiring was barely red. "Thanks for the Christmas present boys. It really saved my bacon."

"Looks like its toast now. Let me fix that for you Bill," Ginny said as she pulled out her wand, but Fleur stepped between them.

"I don't zink so. I like is ze way its is. Like a battle worn pirate." Fleur told her as she ran her hands across his chest. Bill got a goofy look on his face, as he grinned like an idiot. Ginny let out a grunt of disgust as she rolled her eyes.

"Hello cauldron...", Fred said as he leaned over her right shoulder.

"This is kettle...", George added from over her left.

"You're black," Fred and George finished as one. Harry couldn't help but laugh at their antics.

"Get off ya gits! And what do you mean by that?" Fred and George just pointed to Harry. "Oh."

That seemed to be enough to pull Bill out of his daze and straight into big brother mode, as he squared off against Harry. Bill had taken on the job of her protector the day she was born and he took

that job very seriously. Ginny knew that she wouldn't have gotten over the Chamber incident without him. Because of that alone he held a special place in her heart, and probable one of the reasons she was so protective of him as well. She didn't want Fleur breaking his heart.

Bill was big, intimidating, and few had ever held their ground under his stare. He was also bigger than Harry but not by much. She really didn't want him scaring Harry off because she really liked him. She knew that wasn't going to happen By the way Harry held his ground.

"This the part where you ask if my intentions towards your sister are honorable?" Harry asked with an amused look on his face.

"Are they?" Bill growled through clenched teeth.

"Not entirely, but no less than yours are for Moonbeam over there. When something happens...it will be of their choosing. Her family was there for mine after my father was murdered. She is as much a sister to me as Ginny is to you. What you'll do to me if I hurt Ginny goes the same if you hurt her." The two continued to look intensely at each other for a few more seconds, as Bill weighed what Harry had just told him. He had made a very good point. Whether he liked it or not Ginny wasn't a little girl anymore. She had a good head on her shoulders, and by the look of it, she had finally ditched Longbottom. He would have to trust in her judgment. Slowly Bill brought up his hand and offered it to Harry. Both girls let out a sign of relief.

"What, no blood?" Hesta commented as she sat with her back against a far wall. "How disappointing." There was a trail of blood where she had crawled from. Ginny ran over to her followed closely by Fred. He stopped when he saw that most of the chest plate of her armor was blown apart and her bare breasts were showing. He quickly turned away with a face that matched his hair.

Ginny and Fleur went to work on healing Hesta wounds which thankfully were mostly lacerations. Her armor did its job splendidly. All the while, Hesta never took her eyes off Fred.

"Fear not brave Wizard" Hesta said with a grin. "You'll be seeing plenty of them tonight, but be warned I'm a demanding lover." It was all Ginny could do not to burst out laughing on the spot. George

however didn't have any problem having a good laugh at his twin's expense.

"What was that all about?" Bill asked as he came up on his brothers.

"Oh, I have got to hear this story," Harry joined in, as he was more than a little curious himself. George told them what had happened earlier. To their credit, Bill and Harry kept a straight face through it all.

"As I see it you only have one choice," Bill told Fred.

"Yeah, you're gonna have to sleep with her," Harry added.

"What?"

"It's a matter of honor for her. It's not like a Life Debt or anything, but..." Bill gave Harry a little wink as he said it.

"She's rewarding your bravery with her body. To refuse would be the highest disrespect to her and her people." Harry winked back at Bill to let him know he would play along. "Besides, when you're sitting on your back porch telling this story to your grandsons, don't you want to be able to say, Hell yeah, I did her!"

Ginny was watching as Harry was interacting with her brothers with a smirk. It was as if he had known them his whole life. Like there was a place always waiting for him. It made her feel incredibly warm all over.

"Hey!" Ginny scorned them. "What are you collection of gits talking about?"

As one, they all looked over to her and said, "Sex" and then they were back to talking in hushed voices. Ginny looked over at Fleur and grinned at her.

"Boys will be boys."

"Moonbeam is it?" Ginny teased. She was starting to regret not being very nice to her.

"`Arry always called my 'air zat," Fleur told her. "What can I zay, it took."

"I'm sorry I've haven't been very nice to you. It's just I...I..."

"A little over protective of your older brozer?"

"Yeah, I guess I am. Just don't hurt him O.K.?"

"Ze same goes for `Arry."

"Deal?" Ginny said as she offered Fleur her hand.

"Deal." Fleur accepted it with a smile.

The door that led to the vaults opened and a large number of people and goblins came walking out. Director Ragnok was leading them. Directly behind him were four goblins carrying what looked at a distance to be a child. Gringotts' patrons quickly made their way out of the bank, so only the goblins remained.

"Lord Potter you have once again come to the aid of my people in our time of need," Ragnok said with a heavy voice. "We made sure that nothing was touched in your vault, but I regret to inform you that your house elf sacrificed himself to save us." Ginny let out a scream as she saw Duncan being carried by the goblins. The thought that her orders had led to his death was more than she could bear. Harry ran over and took Duncan from the goblins. He then slowly and carefully set him on the floor.

"I'm so sorry Harry," Ginny pleaded with Harry. "I didn't know it would do that to him. I would have never told him to do that. I swear."

If he heard any of what she had said, he showed no sign of it. Harry closed his eyes and placed his hand on Duncan's unmoving chest.

"How long?" Harry's voice that was much more calm and steady than Ginny's. When no one answered Harry yelled, "HOW FREAKIN LONG!" This made almost everyone jump.

"Nary five minutes Lord Potter," Ragnok answered. In one fluid movement Harry ripped Duncan's shirt open exposed his bare chest.

"I need a silver dagger." Harry ordered.

"Harry no! Not 'ere...not even your title will be able to protect zou." Fleur implore him.

"Please Moonbeam," Harry pleaded in a steady voice that cut right through her. She took a long breath and reached into her robe. Just like with Harry's her hand disappeared into nothing, only to reappear seconds later with a long curved Ceremonial Dagger. With a shaky hand she gave it to him.

Harry ran it across his open palm. He then cupped his hand so a small pool of blood formed in his hand. He dipped his finger into the blood and then started to draw runes all over Duncan's body. Bill tried to pull Ginny away from what she was seeing, but she shrugged him off.

Harry started to chant in an unrecognizable language. The blood on Duncan and in his hand started to glow. Harry slammed his cut hand down on his house elf's heart and let his magic flow into Duncan.

"Blood and magic of the master, granted to the servant. Let life and love be reborn," Griphook whispered.

"Blood and magic of the master, granted to the servant. Let life and love be reborn," Hesta said more profoundly. Then all the goblins got down on one knee and started to chant the words. The Weasley's looked around the room in amazement. But for all their efforts nothing seemed to be happening, with the exception that Harry was becoming pale from blood loss. Then Ginny remembered what Duncan told her. She grabbed the dagger and cut her own hand. Bill went to stop her but Fleur pulled him away.

"No Bill, if you stop the ritual they could both die." Ginny traced over the runes with her own blood then placed her cut hand next to Harry's.

"What are you doing?" He whispered to her.

"Duncan said that when you told him to follow my commands that you made me his Mistress as well. I gave the command. It's my duty to make this right." Ginny took a deep breath to steady herself.

"Blood and magic of the mistress, granted to the servant. Let life and love be reborn." As soon as the words left Ginny's lips, Duncan's body gave a jolt. His eyes shot open and he took in a hard breath. Duncan glowed with magic to the point it was hard to look at him. When the glow finally subsided Duncan's right eye was emerald green and his left was chocolate brown.

"Master...Mistress...what have you done?" Duncan asked, but before they could answer another voice filled the lobby.

"I've never seen anything like that before in my life," The Minister of Magic said.

"Was that Blood Magic? It felt so pure." Amelia Bones furthered.

"That is the way Blood Magic was meant to be used, before evil men with dark hearts twisted it for their own cruel purposes," Sasha Desory told them as she walked into the room. All eyes looked to the exquisite looking Succubus. Her long flowing torques hair fell down her sleek back, right between two Bat-like, yet famine looking wings. They ran in length from the top of her head to mid calf. A long thin black tail swayed back and forth as if it had a mind of its own. Evocative violet eyes looked down on Ginny, but she didn't waver under the piercing gaze. Sasha's full blood red lips curved in acknowledgement. Her eyes softened as they fell on Harry, before she turned to face the Minister.

"Be that as it may, Blood Magic is...is...illegal." Rufus Scrimgeour's eyes had glassed over for the briefest of seconds, as his mind started to fog over. His Auror training came to his aid and he was able to focus his mind. He knew better than to look a Succubus in the eye, but he couldn't help himself. Sasha's brow arched. This one has a strong mind...good I like a challenge.

She moved her head just enough so that her silky hair broke apart to revile the flawless creamy skin of her neck. The minister with realizing it licked his lips. Sasha offered her hand and he kissed it without breaking eye contact.

"That is very true Minister Scrimgeour, but so is my presence here. Am I not unjustly labeled by your government...as...a...dark...creature?" Sasha's voice was soft and sultry, as she brought back her hand and slowly ran it down the

length of her neck from earlobe to collarbone. His throat suddenly felt very dry.

"Please call me Rufus."

"You are far too kind. I am called Sasha, Matriarch of the Clan Desory." Sasha's curtsy was slow and deliberately exposed the already tantalizing cleavage of her non-existent top. Several males both human and goblin alike swallowed hard. Harry mouthed two minutes to Ginny. She cocked her eye brow at that, then mouth one minute back to him. A handshake later the bet was set.

"You have come to us in our hour of need. Creatures of such beauty and selflessness should never be considered dark."

"Perhaps, now is a season of change for both our people?" Sasha's wings flutter for a second. Rufus breathed in her tantalizing scent and signed. Harry whispered. "That's cheating." He was swiftly rewarded with a stinging snap to his rear by a Succubus tail.

"I forgot how much it could sting when she does that," Harry grunted out through clenched teeth. He didn't see Ginny's mouth drop.

"I believe you are right. Would you care to embrace it with me?" Sasha stepped close to Scrimgeour and whispered into his ear. "Once the ink is dry and the magic is binding I will...vigorously."

"Then I shall put forth my best effort to see that it does." That was when Amelia had to look away to hide her smiling face. She never believed in the treatment of the Succubi by the Wizarding World. Most witches were either intimidated by or jealous of their beauty, which was what led them to being marked as Dark Creatures several hundred years ago. Amelia was saved by one in her early years as an Auror and since then learned to see them as they truly were. She couldn't begrudge Sasha for using every advantage she had to secure a better life for her people. She almost felt sorry for the minister...almost. Poor bastard never had a chance.

"I wish Lord Potter to be the voice of my people in the Wizengamot. I also ask that you show him and his...little friend compassion and understanding. Though their actions were rash and impulsive, it was done out of the purest of intentions."

"Well...since this was the first offense and it was healing magic in nature, I see no reason that a hefty fine will serve more justice today." Rufus was no fool. He had covered up more grievous offenses than this before. For Lords that he truly desisted, it was just how the game was played. He needed Potter on his side. By his tally, the young Lord and his godfather now controlled forty-five percent of the votes in the Wizengamot. After the purging they had done at the Ministry, he was more than sure they now had the controlling vote. By the display of his Marauder's today, they were a force to be reckoned with. This was about survival. Of course having a night with a Succubus...it looked like Christmas had come early this year.

"Your benevolence has no end, as will my gratitude in this matter," Sasha purred and Ginny shook her head at that. Though, she didn't care for the little friend comment or her familiarity with Harry, the woman did just get them both out of some serious trouble. Potter, you have some serious explaining to do.

Harry helped Ginny to her feet and took her hand. He ran his wand across her wound and it healed instantly. She took his hand and returned the favor. An odd kind of silence fell between them. Not awkward per say, but an unspoken understanding as it were.

"Lord Potter, the Goblin Army is at your disposal. We will stand with you and the Ministry. That upstart want-to-be Dark Lord will regret the day he drew Goblin blood," Director Ragnok said breaking the silence. Once again the Minister of Magic knew he had made the right decision. The winds of the war were changing. He best have it to his back rather than in his face.

Sasha turned to Harry and handed him a small vial with a silvery substance in it. "For your viewing pleasure," She whispered into his ear so only he could hear. Thanks to Ginny's Animagus, she was able to catch every word. She had not completely mastered her form yet, but her senses were starting to become more acute by the day. The fact that Sasha was looking Ginny in the eye as she did it didn't sit too well with her either. The youngest Weasley unknowingly showed fang, to which the Succubus returned the favor with a wink and a kiss to Harry's cheek.

"Be nice," Harry warned her, to which she answered. "I thought you liked it when I was wicked?" It was a good thing Ginny didn't see

where her tail wandered. He was pretty sure it would have been on if she did.

"His little friend's name is Ginny Weasley, pleased to meet you," Ginny said as she stepped between them and shook Sasha's hand. Her grip was firmer than her petite size would suggest. Sasha smiled at the intent of the act.

"I seriously doubt it, my Fiery Alpha...I seriously doubt it," She told Ginny, and then with a nod to Harry she took her leave.

"Brianna sends her love," Sasha said over her shoulder to Harry as she walked away, with more swing to her hips than was necessary in Ginny's opinion.

"Send mine back," Harry answered in a tender voice, as she disappeared out of sight.

"You and I are going to have a nice long talk, Potter, and to quote your mum. Bits...tallest Tower," Ginny said as she turned to face Harry.

"You know, it sounds like foreplay when you say it like that?" Harry said with a teasing grin.

"Git."

"Tease."

"Not to interrupt what I'm sure was going to be some very entertaining banter, but I need a few moments of your time, Miss Weasley. Perhaps an empty office would be best?" Amelia Bones asked Ginny. She nodded in agreement and started to follow her, but not before Ginny pointed two of her fingers to her eyes, and then to Harry's. He blew her a kiss, to which she scowled at. Harry returned fire with a cocky grin that got her blood flowing every time he did it. It wasn't until her back was to him that she smiled. He's going to be a handful.

"What is it about the scoundrels that make a girl's heart beat just a little bit faster?" Amelia commented as she led Ginny into the empty office. Lily and Sirius came into the bank. Sirius went over to talk to the Minister, as Lily motioned Harry to follow her. Once around a

corner and away from prying eyes, Lily lunched herself at her son. She wrapped her only child in a fierce hug. Harry could feel her trembling. He tightened his grip around her and waited for her to steady. Once she had her breathing steady, Lily started to run her hands over his upper body looking for injuries, just like she did when he was a boy. Harry had learned to accept it, it was her way and she would worry until she was sure he was alright. Harry took off her mask and wiped the tears from her cheeks.

"ORCS! YOU JUST HAD TO GO CHARGING INTO BLOODY ORCS!" Lily yelled as she started to hit him repeatably. He had also learned to accept this as well. She needed the release and she wasn't hitting very hard. She buried her face into his chest and said, "Are you trying to put me in an early grave?" Harry lifted her face so she was looking at the mirror image of her own eyes.

"You went into a sewer full of Trolls without backup." The weight of what he didn't say after that made it hard for her to breathe.

"Touche`" Lily bowed her head in agreement. The silence between them was deafening. Harry then kissed the top of her head and she wrapped her son in another fierce hug. They stayed like that for quite awhile. Sirius stood sentinel down the hall to insure they had their privacy.

"Do you think we should ask Potter to join the DA?" Hermione asked Ron just a heartbeat before he was going to dig in to his dinner. She knew once he got started, she would have to dance around naked to get him to stop. When it came to food, her long time boyfriend was single-minded to the point of obsession. She blamed his mum for that. It was just a shame he couldn't apply that kind of blind devotion to his studies, but if he wouldn't be her Ron if he did. She kind of liked him the way he was, even if he was her polar opposite. It was a fact that annoyed her to no end when she was younger. Now, she saw the brilliance in it, they were just what the other in all honesty needed.

The muggles would say he was the street-smart to her book-smart. Her seriousness was balanced out by his whimsical nature. She had always prided herself on her ability to see the big picture, but it was Ron that always was able to get the little details that they needed. Probably one of the reasons he was so brilliant at chess. They were

the perfect partners in her opinion, though she would be the first to tell anyone that his table manners needed loads of work.

If anyone had told her that Ron would be sitting next to her bed crying when she woke up after being petrified she would have called them mental. Yet that was what she woke up to. He poured his heart out to her as they talked for hours. He had touched her soul in a way that no one had ever before. Not that they didn't still have their rows. They had them plenty and she suspected they always would. Though lately it had been more like foreplay...not that she was complaining.

"Sorry, what was that luv?"

"I asked you if you think we should ask Potter to join the DA?"

"How would I know? I've never met the bloke," Ron said odd handedly.

"What do you mean you haven't met him? You live in the same dorm room you prat."

"And where did I sleep last night?"

"Oh."

"Glad you're all caught up now."

"Don't get cheeky with me or you'll be sleeping in your own bed for the rest of the year."

"Right, because you're the picture of restraint. Don't roll you eyes at me. Last night was your idea, not mine."

"We're getting off subject Weasley."

"Oh yes, Potter...DA...like we need another uptight Noble Lord bossing everyone around."

"He seemed like a very down to earth sort to me. He even made a muggle joke to me last night, not to mention he helped that first year. His mum's muggle-born so I'm pretty sure he's not all about blood status. I've heard that his mum is brilliant at potions and charms. His

godfather is our DADA Professor. Since he's not taking either of their classes, I'd bet my knickers that they've taught him loads more than what's taught here. By the grace of Merlin, if the Daily Prophet is only marginally right, he kicked some serious Death Eater bum yesterday. If You-Know-Who really did kill his dad, I'm pretty sure he's not on Malfoy's team. He got past the wards of the castle, doesn't give a damn about the stupid house rivalries, and didn't back down from Dumbledore last night. Wait, there's something I'm forgetting. Oh yes...he killed a bloody Basilisk! No, I can't think of one reason why we should ask him to join the DA."

"You don't have to hit me in the head with a Bludger to make your point Hermione. Come to think of it, I'm not fancying you thinking that much about him to begin with."

"Jealous?"

"Should I be?"

"You don't have to worry about me, but I think your sister fancies him."

"That I noticed. Where is she, by the way? Ginny wasn't here at lunch either."

"She had to escort a new student to Diagon Alley to get some class supplies. I'm sure she's fine. What's the worst that could happen?"

As if on cue, the roar of Harry's motorbike could be heard getting closer. Lily and Sirius looked at each other and smiled. They knew he took his time getting back just to piss off Dumbledore. By the look on the man's face he was doing a bang up job. By the time word reached his ears about the attack at Diagon Alley, they were already back and he was none the wiser.

All the injured were sent to St. Mungo's and repairs to the building in Diagon Alley were well on their way. Oddly enough there were very few fatalities. Not counting the Death Eaters of course. Voldemort had summoned Snape, and he had yet to return. The Minister had put a lid on what happened today, and was stonewalling Dumbledore. His informants within the ministry were purposely being left out of the loop. The only good news was that Auror

Nymphadora Lupin had been reassigned to Hogwarts. He planned to put her to good use.

Harry and Ginny walked into the Great Hall. She was still wearing his trench coat and grinning broadly. Dumbledore was on his feet and marching towards them in a heartbeat. Harry leaned down and whispered into Ginny's ear.

"Hey Tease, you ready to start some shit?"

"Git. I'm already there." Ginny grabbed Harry by the back of his head and planted the boldest kiss that Hogwarts had ever seen on his lips. Cat calls and whistles filled the Great Hall as one of Ginny's legs snaked around Harry's. All the inhabitece in the great Hall drifted away as the kiss became more passionate. Their tongues battled for dominance as Ginny grabbed fists full of hair. Harry hands lifted her soft lower cheeks up and she wrapped her legs around his waist. They laid claim to each other the bold Gryffindor way.

"What the hell do you think you're doing Ginny?" Neville yelled as he leapt to his feet.

Ginny gave him a cold stare, and then said in her sweetest voice, "Trading up...Duh."

Well, there you have another chapter. I hope you liked it. It was a little on the fluffy side I know.

A/N: Thank you for all the love and encouragement you gave me that last chapter. By far the most reviews of all my chapters. What surprises me is the different types of interpretations of what I write. Because of that I will try to explain some of the things that were misconstrued. Some of you were angry about Ginny's reaction to Sasha. Remember she's a sixteen year old girl, with all the emotional baggage that goes along with that. Then you add she also dealing with her primal side due to her animagus. She feeling territorial, hormonal, and in heat. She hasn't got a handle on that just yet. I thought her reaction was a honest one. I never was a 16 year old girl so I'm guessing at this point. Either way, try to cut her some slack.

As for the Blood Ritual Harry performed, If I made it look like a Necromancer Ritual I apologize. I made it up off the top of my head and I don't know the first thing about Necromancy. For those of you that wanted a big fight scene between Greyback and Harry. You're gonna get it. I just wanted it to be when they both were at full power and in the light of a full moon. Now on with the story. I hope you like it.

"GET YOU FILTHY HANDS OFF MY PROPERTY POTTER!" Neville yelled as he pulled his wand, only to find both Harry's and Ginny's leveled at him. An amazing feat considering she still had her legs wrapped around his waist and one hand full of hair, while Harry was using his free hand to hold her up. To the uneducated eye it looked as if they were just really fast. Albus Dumbledore knew better.

Even as the cheek left Ginny's lips, Harry was twisting his body so he was mostly between Neville and Ginny. Harry and Ginny both had their wands already in hand. Regardless of how impulsive it may have looked, it was well planned out. Neville's reaction was never in question. Ginny knew him too well. Her comment hit all his red buttons on their mark. Pride, Arrogance, and Possessiveness were assaulted at once. A little public humiliation and his temper overloaded his common sense in the blink of an eye. How very Slytherin of them. Dumbledore was sure this was Potter's doing.

"I have until my seventeenth birthday and I plan to enjoy every second of it," Ginny lied. Her talk with Madame Bones was very enlightening. After much debate, they agreed that this course of action would better suit their goals. With luck Neville and Dumbledore would be in Azkaban by the end of the year. They just

had to give them enough rope to hang themselves, another one of Harry's muggle sayings that she was starting to get use to. If not, Harry would go with plan B. She knew he wanted to go straight to plan B to begin with. He knew it was her battle and out of respect for her, he would follow her lead.

Neville was shocked to see both of them pointing wands at him. Due to the threat of Dumbledore's wrath, he had the luxury of hexing anyone he wanted without any true consequences. The law Dumbledore put in effect stated that attacking a Noble Lord who was the last of his line could be considered an act of Genocide. Unfortunately, Potter fell under that protection too.

"PUT YOUR WANDS AWAY THIS INSTANCE!" Commanded Dumbledore, as he marched up to the three youths. Neville spared a quick glance. The Headmaster had his wand drawn and he knew he would back him up so he relaxed a little. Then he saw that both Professors Black and Potter had their wands drawn as well. This wasn't going to end well. He knew he had to regain some of his lost respect. It was time to see how Potter would handle his Parseltongue.

"You will pay for this Potter," Neville spoke slowly and venomously, confident that it would unsettle Harry and Ginny. It was only partly successful. Ginny was unnerved by it, but she had always had been. It took her back to the chamber and in Neville's own twisted mind she needed to be reminded that she owed him her life. Potter's reaction was not what he expected.

"Seriously? Did you just hiss at me? What are you...five? Well, hiss hiss hissy hiss right back at ya scooter." Harry tried not to laugh at the ridiculousness of his taunt. He looked around to see that most of the students were as pale as ghosts, Ginny included. He knew he had to break this hold he had on everyone. "Are you people kidding me? It's just noise to scare your enemy...let me demonstrate." Harry turned his attention to Neville and gave him a feral smile with just enough fangs to make Longbottom nervous.

"ROARRRRR!" Harry roared like his panther and made everyone but Lily and Sirius jump. However, Neville's reaction was the one that amused him the most.

"Thank you for proving my point Nevy," Harry said as he pointed to Longbottom's pants.

"Ewww! That's gonna itch when it dries." Ginny added for good measure, which made everyone start laughing and was enough to send Neville running from the Great Hall.

"This isn't over Potter!" The Chosen One yelled over his retreating shoulder.

"Why do they always say that, when it clearly is?" Harry asked Ginny. She was hard pressed to keep her giggling under control; most of the Great Hall wasn't even trying.

"SILENCE!" Dumbledore bellowed out. Harry and Ginny rolled their eyes and turned to face their Headmaster. "Was that really necessary Mr. Potter?" His voice was dripping with disdain.

"Actually it was." Harry countered teeming with contempt for the Headmaster. "We are at War in case you've forgotten. I for one don't believe in giving the enemy any advantage over me. Something you should have instilled in these students once he returned to power."

"I will not be lectured to by the likes of you!"

"Getting a little unhinged by a little constructive criticism Headmaster? Perhaps you should think of retiring. You're not exactly a spring chicken anymore." Lily had to bow her head to hide her face in a curtain of rich red hair. She covered her mouth with her hand to keep her laughing under control. Sirius had to put his hand on her shoulder to keep them from bouncing up and down. He just wished he could see the old fart's face. Harry would have to show him the memory later. He was sure it was priceless.

"You would do well to remember who is headmaster and who is student, boy." Albus snarled at Harry. "You are far from my equal" Internally Harry was laughing. Could you make this any easier old man?

"Your Chosen...Boy, just ran from the hall after he pissed his pants. I would have thought after all the training you given him, he wouldn't be so skittish. You are right on one matter. We are not colleague,

friends and you sure as hell are not my equal old man. From this point forward you will address me as Lord Potter. Unlike your boy, I in fact earned that title. In return, I will address you as Headmaster and I will do my best to tolerate your eccentric teaching methods. Be warned though, I will not for a second tolerate, and I'm sure the Board of Governors will side with me on this, your blatant favoritism of the Chosen...Git was it Ginny?" Harry grinned back at her for conformation.

"Yes luv, that one was always my favorite." She beamed back at him.

"Does have a certain ring to it," Harry winked at her as he said it.

"And how many Dark Lords have you brought down?"

"Please, we both know Nevy was a tool for his destruction. Alice Longbottom's selfless sacrifice was what brought down Tommy-boy." Dumbledore's eyes snapped to Ginny as he realized how much Potter had learned in the short time he had been here. Ginny just shrugged with a grin. She was enjoying seeing Dumbledore squirm.

"Keep your voice down" Albus sneered in a hushed voice. "That is not common knowledge for a reason." "Yes, let's keep the masses uneducated. It's so much easier to control and manipulate them when they can't make an informed decision. I however have learned from my father's mistake, or have you forgotten just whose house that bastard came to first that night?" Ginny gasped at what she heard Harry say, as did most of the students in the Great Hall. It dawned on Dumbledore that this was not the time and place for this conversation. He needed to regain some control over the situation quickly.

"Ha-Lord Potter, You must understand that some could use that information for dark purposes."

"I believe some already have."

"We will continue this discussion in my office, where we will discuss your and Miss Weasley's punishment for not being in class today." Dumbledore turned to address Ginny directly. "Your mother will be most displeased if she was to find out that your scholarship was revoked."

"You can take that so-called scholarship and shove it right up your old wrinkled-, "Harry stopped her before she finished that statement with just a look. She narrowed her eyes at him, as she tried to regain her composure. "Can't let you have all the fun."

"Damn you're sexy when you do that." Ginny lightly slapped him upside the head.

"Focus git."

"Tease."

"Later."

"Damn right later." Ron moved to get up, but Dean and Seamus grabbed his shoulders and pushed him back down into his seat.

"Let it play mate, let it play," Dean told him.

"You don't really have any moral high ground to stand on you know," Seamus added. Hermione gave him a threatening finger and he all but deflated. Dumbledore cleared his throat loudly.

"Oh, you're still here?" Harry asked him dismissively. "That's right our punishment for not being in class today. I know the elderly tend to get forgetful in their twilight years, but you did grant me permission to go to Diagon Alley, and to take a prefect as a guide. I don't see the problem."

"You were supposed to be back before lunch. It is now dinner."

"We gathered that by the setting sun, but thanks for the update."

"Nice one Tease."

"Thanks Git."

"I think Lord Potter has been a bad influence on you Miss Weasley."

"Has he ever. Oops, did I say that out loud?" Ginny said as she slid her hand into his and laid her head on his shoulder.

"I think it would be best that we all take a little breather," Lily Potter said as she walked up to her son. "Wouldn't you agree Albus?" Her tone made it very clear that it was a rhetorical question. She gave Harry and Ginny a warning look that told them to stand down.

"Sorry Mum, it's been a trying day to say the least."

"Yeah Professor Potter I'm sorry too. Ever since the attack, we've been a little on edge. Harry thought a long ride in the country would calm my nerves."

"And did it?" Lily asked with a raised brow.

"Yes and no," Ginny said with a slight blush. Before Dumbledore could speak, Lily answered his unasked question.

"This is my fault Albus. Harry sent me word about what happened today and asked if it would be alright to take their time getting back. With all the classes today it must have slipped my mind to tell you."

"She's good." Ginny whispered in Harry's ear. He leaned back and whispered back to her. "You have no idea."

"I need to know what happened today Lily."

"I'm afraid that they can't tell you. The ministry asked them to keep quiet until family members of the fallen could be notified." Lily used her most diplomatic voice in the hope to soothe Dumbledore. The aged wizard seemed to calm down considerably. He knew it was pointless to push the issue. He could pull Ginny into his office and probe her mind, but he doubted that Lily would have let her go alone. Not after what he tried with Harry last night. He would just have to wait for a more favorable time to alter Ginny's mind and get her back into the fold. Right now, he needed to call an emergency Order meeting.

"As for you two," Lily turned around and pointed at Harry and Ginny. "I raised you to respect your elders young man. You will do twenty laps around the Black Lake for the cheek you showed the Headmaster. GO!" Lily told her son in mock disgust. She knew he could do that in his sleep and it would show the school that she wouldn't show favoritism to him. Harry gave her a fake glare before

giving Ginny a kiss on the cheek and left. "And don't roll your eyes at me!"

Harry stopped for a second, playing the part of an annoyed child, "Yes Mum!" and then continued out of the Great Hall.

"Now Miss Weasley, you will be serving detention with me right now, let's go." Ginny bowed her head and turned to leave as well. Hermione caught a glimpse of a grin through a break in the curtain of hair that was hiding her face. She was going to have to talk to her later, but not before she had a little talk with Ron first. She didn't want his over protectiveness screwing this up for her.

"Albus," Lily said as she looked back at him and nodded goodbye, and then she shot a finger at one individual that was sitting at the Gryffindor table. "There had better be a stain on my blouse Mr. Thomas."

"Sorry Professor," Dean said and quickly looked down at his plate of food.

"Busted," Both Ron and Seamus snickered out, which earned them a glare from Hermione.

"Would you like me to take care of that for you Professor?" Hermione asked Lily. The Professor leaned down and whispered something in her ear. Hermione's eyes shot open in shock and then she got a predatory smile on her face.

"You are good." The Head Girl beamed at her new favorite Professor. Lily gave Hermione a wink and then followed Ginny out of the Great Hall.

Emma and Daphne were sitting in silence in the Library. The seventh year Slytherin was true to her word and helped her find all the books that she needed to understand the world she just entered. Daphne was right, they weren't boring reads and quite informative. Still, her mind kept going back to what happened at dinner. More importantly, Daphne's reaction to what happened. Emma couldn't take the silence any more.

"You like him, don't you?" She asked in bold Gryffindor fashion.

"I'm sorry did you say something?"

"Don't give me that. You heard me. You like him don't you?"

"And who is this him you speak of?"

"I might be a first year, but I'm not an idiot. I was looking at you when they kissed. You can hide your emotions well, but I saw it, if only for a second."

"My, aren't we the observant one?" Daphne was impressed and a little annoyed, but mostly impressed.

"A wise witch once told me to be aware of my environment."

"Perhaps I'll take you on as an Apprentice. No point letting my brilliance go to waste." Emma changed her hair color blond and her eyes Daphne's dazzling shade of blue. She sat up properly and looked at her with Daphne's air of superiority.

"Don't you get cheeky with me young lady," Daphne snapped as she pointed a warning finger at Emma. The first year gave her best puppy dog eyes and pouting lips.

"Ugh, you worse than my little sister," Daphne said as she rolled her eyes. "All right, class is in session. What did we learn today at supper?"

"Harry's a smartarse."

"Yes that was rather amusing, but beyond that?"

"Well he obviously hates Dumbledore, but why?"

"Good, now continue that train of thought."

"His dad, remember the way his voice changed when he mentioned him. Harry said he learned from his father's mistake. He also said that You-Know-Who came to his house first that night. Wait a sec." Emma reached into her bag and pulled out her copy of the Daily Prophet. She quickly reread the article on Harry. She gasped and covered her mouth when she got to the part about his dad. She snapped her head up to see Daphne patently waiting for her to

connect the dots. "H-he killed Harry's dad the same night that Longbottom stopped him. But why would he go after those two families?"

"Good question Emma. A year and a half ago, Longbottom led a group of students into the Department of Mysteries. It's where they store prophecies. A group of Death Eaters were waiting for them. There were rumors that one of the prophecies was about You-Know-Who and the Boy-Who-Lived. No one knows what it said, but after that night Longbottom was called the Chosen One. Now, you have to understand that prophecies are a fickle thing at best. They are very easily misread. It's all about how you interpret it."

"This is what got his father killed, isn't it? Harry said Dumbledore doesn't like giving people all the facts. He blames Dumbledore for his father's death, doesn't he?"

"And the flower blooms," Daphne said with a smile.

"There has to be more to it than that?"

"Of course there is, but we don't have that information yet, do we?"

"Ugh, this is giving me a headache."

"Well that's enough for tonight. You have a very keen mind Emma, so I trust you know to keep this information to yourself." Daphne was very impressed with Emma's reasoning out abilities. She however read between all the lines that Harry threw out there. Things were about to change at Hogwarts and looked as if Harry had the Board of Governors in his pocket. This was defiantly shaping up to be a very interesting year.

"You're still avoiding the question I asked you earlier."

"What question?" Both girls jumped and turned to see who had interrupted them. Both of their eyes widened when they saw Harry Potter standing in front of them. When he got only silence he figured they weren't going to tell him.

"Sorry, private conversation, my bad."

Daphne gave Harry a slight nod, then shot Emma a questioning look. At first she didn't know what to think about it. Then it dawned on her and she jumped up.

"Sorry Daphne, this is one of those Noble House Social Formalities you were telling me about." Again Daphne gave her an affirming nod, and then stood up. Emma came around the table and stood between Harry and Daphne. Emma cleared her throat and turned to Harry.

"Lord Potter it is my great pleasure to introduce to my good friend Lady Daphne Greengrass." Emma took Daphne's hand and offered it to Harry. Realization shined on his face and Harry took Daphne's hand bowed to her and kissed her hand.

"The pleasure is all mine my Lady. I would consider it the greatest of honors if you would call me Harry." He looked up at Daphne and her eyes softened. She gave Harry a proper curtsy.

"You are far too kind Harry, and please call me Daphne?"

"Whew! Glad I didn't screw that up," Emma said with relief. Harry and Daphne chuckled at her comment.

"You did it perfectly Emma. I'm very proud of you. Now, if both of you would excuse me, I have to return to my common room, and I believe you have something to discuss with Harry." Daphne said with a look that told Emma to just do it already. Emma shook her head in agreement and Daphne smiled and rubbed the top of her head.

"See you around kiddo, Harry." Daphne turned to leave, but Harry stopped her.

"It's getting late. If you don't mind waiting, I could walk you back to the Slytherin Dungeon?"

"That's sweet. But I've been getting back on my own for the last six years." Then without thinking she got on the tips of her toes and kissed Harry on the cheek. Her eyes shot open as she realized what she just did and she quickly turned to leave. Harry was just as shocked by the gesture as she was.

Emma completely missed the exchange, because at the time she was looking past them to a table where two of her attackers were sitting with some other Slytherin's. They were trying to watch them and not be obvious about it. They were failing miserably at it. She glared at them and they quickly looked away.

"Are you sure? It's no bother really."

"No it's alright. Nobody messes with the Ice Queen. Bye." Daphne said without looking back as she made a quick exit from the Library. Once out in the hall she hit herself in the head and mentally berated herself for doing something so bold and reckless.

Harry gestured for Emma to take a seat. She did and found that she couldn't look him in the eye. She opted to look at her hands instead. So much so that she failed to see the table of Slytherin's quickly pack up and follow Daphne out. Nor did she see the vicious look that one of them gave her and Harry before closing the door behind them.

Harry took Emma's hands in his in hopes of calming her. That fact that they were trembling made him think the worst. He pushed a few stray locks of hair behind her ear. Emma let out a long breath and relaxed.

"What happened cub?"

"Cub?" Emma asked more to herself than Harry. She thought back to what she had seen earlier that morning. "Oh my,you really are an Animagus aren't you?"

"You know about Animagi?"

"Professor McGonagall turned into a cat in front of the class today. Plus, I kind of saw you turn into a big panther this morning."

"How did that go?"

"I fainted, and that's kind of where this story begins..."

"I have to say this is the best detention that I have ever served," Ginny said, as she finished cutting up some Azgar root and then tossed it in the boiling cauldron. They were currently in Lily's potions lab that was in her trunk. Like Harry's it was like a flat inside. Though

it was decorated in a very differently than her son's. It had warm comfortable colors that made you felt right at home right from the off. The walls were covered with pictures of her, Harry, and Professor Black, as well as some of Tonks and her parents as well as Lupin. In one she was standing with a blond woman that looked dangerously close to Malfoy's mum. There was one of four boys that looked like it was taken in the seventies. There was a red headed girl scolding them and they were looking sheepish. All except for the one in the front that was grinning ear to ear, the one that look like Harry. The same one that was in so many photos with Harry's mum. He was always looking at her with such love that you felt like you were intruding.

"Glad you like it. Do you serve much detention?" Lily questioned with an amused look that told her she already knew the answer, but wanted to hear all the same.

"A fair few, mostly from Snape. He tends to pick on us Gryffindors the most, but I've been known to get a bit cheeky from time to time."

"And here I thought my son was being a bad influence on you."

"Not entirely, but he does seem to draw it out of you, doesn't he?"

"Welcome to my world. As for Snape, I think it was time we had one of our famous chats."

"It wouldn't involve the tallest tower would it? I would be more than happy to sell tickets for that show."

"Please tell me he's at least a competent Professor?"

"That would depend if you consider leaving the directions on the blackboard and giving you an hour to decipher his chicken scratches competent, then yes."

"Oh Sevy, me and you are going to go round and round," Lily said to herself, but Ginny caught the nickname.

"Sevy?"

"Once upon a time we were friends if you can believe it. Oh look, I think it's done. Why don't we sit and have some tea while it cools."

Lily gestured to living room. Ginny got the feeling she was changing the subject and took the hint. While Lily was in the kitchen making the tea, Ginny took the opportunity to look around. There were so many pictures of them over the years. Her favorite would have to be the one where Harry looked to be five. He was riding on the back of a big black dog wearing a cowboy hat, a pair of boots, and pretty much nothing else. She was surprised to see that he used to wear glasses. Her eyes then fell on the man that looked identical to Harry, all except the eyes even though they held the same mischief in them as Harry's did. She was staring so intently that she didn't hear Lily come back into the room with a tray of tea.

"Uncanny, how much they look alike." Ginny jumped at the sudden statement. "Sorry dear, didn't mean to startle you." Lily kissed two of her fingers and put them to the picture. There was sadness in her eyes for a second and then she quickly pushed it aside and smiled at Ginny. They then took their seats.

"It must be hard sometimes, looking at Harry. They have the same gleam in the eyes."

"You are blunt, aren't you?" Lily chuckled as she poured the tea.

"Sorry, I have six brothers. Tact is about useful as a candle in a hailstorm in my house."

"Preaching to the choir. Harry is about as subtle as a flying brick." Both of them looked at each other for all of two seconds before bursting into a fit of laughter. Lily was wiping the tears from her eyes when she regained her composure.

"To answer your question, yes there are times, but I have the best of James in him. Until we are reunited, that will have to do."

"Sorry if I crossed a line."

"You didn't, but I appreciate the thought all the same."

"Can I ask you a personal question?"

"I think you will find you can."

"Why did you bring up the Succubus thing in front of the whole school?"

"I know I might have come off as a bitch, but believe it or not, I'm trying to protect my son though I doubt he sees it that way."

"You lost me there."

"Look Ginny, we all come into a relationship with a certain amount of excess baggage. I would hate for Harry to fall in love with a witch, then a year later she finds out about Sasha and can't handle it. It would break his heart."

"Doesn't help she's got the body of a goddess and they have been...intimate."

"Are you planning on holding that against him?"

"No, of course not. Doesn't mean that I have to like it."

"Congratulations, you're human. And no, you don't have to like it. I take it you saw her?"

"Yes, she was messing with me and she called me a fiery alpha, whatever the hell that means."

"Well I'll be damned, huh. Believe it or not that was a complement. She approves of you. I know that doesn't mean anything to you, but it does to my son."

"It wasn't just sex between them was it?"

"No it wasn't, but for what it's worth the way he looks at you should tell you all you need to know."

"So, what was that we just brewed anyway?" Ginny said desperately trying to change the subject. She was starting to feel very overwhelmed. Boy, did she pick the wrong topic.

"It's called Feminin. It means restraint. It's a potion that I created, and it's for you."

"M-me? W-why is it for me?" Lily managed to keep a straight face at Ginny's reaction, but just barely. She knew all too well what Ginny was going through at the moment.

"The first heat cycle is always the worst and it is the most potent. The potion will curb the urges considerably and you won't be releasing quite as much pheromones. This will mean that you can be around my son without both of you feeling the overwhelming urge to shag your brains out. How you both have managed to last this long is beyond me. What is your Animagus form by the way? I know it has to at least be compatible with my son's or you wouldn't be going through it right now."

"A little on the blunt side yourself, aren't ya?" Ginny was red in the face from embarrassment. How does she know all this?

"Would you like some answer to the questions that must be running through your mind right about now?" Ginny numbly nodded her head. Lily went to open her mouth then stopped for some reason. It's was a delicate and deeply private situation and one she had never openly talked with someone about before. Just rip the Band-Aid off already! If anyone would understand it would be her. She took a deep breath and dove right in. They were both Gryffindors after all.

"I know you're in heat because I can smell it. I know the smell because I'm an Animagus, a Lioness to be precise. Which unfortunately happen to be compatible with a Panther, one of lives quirky little ironies? So when my son mastered his form you can guess what little present I got. I had a few awkward moments before I was able to figure out what was happening to me. Took a trip to visit my old Potions Professor and together we invented that potion we just made. I've made a few improvement to it since then, so it doesn't taste like troll dung. One vial every morning until the cycle is complete. Trust me you'll know when you done because the urge will be gone. The potion curbs it, but unfortunately it doesn't take it away. I can't believe I'm telling you this, but if you want to keep your sanity you're going to have to...self-service for lack of a better word. At least once, probably twice a day would be best. Trust me, you will need the release. Just try to think of it as scratching an itch. Now we never, never, never, never, never, never ever, and I mean ever have to speak of this again." Both women sat in silence for what felt like hours, until Ginny poised a question,

"Sooo...who's your favorite Quidditch team?"

"Bless you child."

A/N; Now before the flames come flying at me, let me explain. I realized that if Ginny's animagus could be affected by Harry's, so could Lily's. In case I wasn't perfectly clear. Nothing happened! I realized I wrote myself into a corner on this one, and this is me trying to write myself out. A human in heat is uncharted ground, even in fanfiction, or at least I think it is. Lily's not trying to be meddlesome, she's trying to nudge them in the right direction.

As for Harry offering to walk Daphne walk to her common room. He was being chivalrous, not a horn-dog. Oh, he would have made sure Emma got back to her common room first. That being said or wrote, let me know what you think.

The group of Slytherins that was following Daphne kept a good distance behind her. Pansy cast a charm to make their foot falls silent so as not to warn her of their presence. Vincent Crabbe led the group that consisted of Gregory Goyle, Pansy Parkinson, Millicent Bulstrode, and Blaise Zabini. He was glad that Draco wasn't with them. He was tired of walking in his shadow. Malfoy's reign was at an end. It was time to show the Slytherin house just who should lead them.

Plus, it was high time the Ice Queen learned her proper place. Greenglass would soon learn to respect and fear him. The five of them would educate her to never again go against her house. Once they were alone he planned on breaking her in properly. Just like his father had trained his mum to deny him nothing, he would instruct Daphne in the same manner. She would resist at first and he would enjoy every second of her humiliation. She had refused him too many times. With enough repetitive tutoring she would beg for his touch and he would put it anywhere he damn well wanted.

Crabbe planned on making good use of her gold and status as the Greenglass Heir. He would claim her Wizengamot vote and elevate himself even higher than his father as one of the Dark Lord's inner circle. Everything would soon come together. Daphne would be playing a dual role as his Noble Lady in public, and his whore in private.

They stayed in the shadows as much as possible, but feared that they had been discovered when Daphne suddenly stopped and looked over her shoulder. After a few seconds she shrugged and turned back around and continued on her way. Then at the end of the hall she broke from the rouet that would lead her back to the Slytherin dungeon.

"Where the hell is she going?" Zabini asked.

"Looks like, she's heading to the Owlery." Goyle answered him in a hushed voice.

"Perfect, only the owls will hear her beg for mercy." Crabbe was practically jumping with anticipation.

"We better put up a barrier so we're not interrupted." Pansy suggested.

"Good thinking Pansy. Draco always did underestimate you," Millicent said to her best friend.

"Oh I'm so done with that rubbish. He was too much of a daddy's boy for my taste." Pansy spat out in disgust.

Once Daphne was inside the Owlery and the barrier was in place they rushed up the stairs confident that the noise coming from the Owlery would keep her ignorant of their presence. They were so sure of their own superiority that they failed to notice that the top three steps were covered with ice, very odd for this time of year.

Goyle was leading the group and was by far the biggest one of them. He lost his footing on the second to the top step. Flailing his arms wildly in an attempt to grab on to anything for support, he grabbed hold of the first thing he came across. That turned out to be Millicent. The girl was unable to support her weight and his as well. Together they took the rest of their fellow Slytherins down the stairs with them. They all came to a rest when they collided with the barrier that they had placed there.

Daphne stepped out of the doorway with a broad smile across her face. It quickly turned to disgust as she shook her head at their failed attempt. With a wave of her wand the ice disappeared in a flash.

"That had to be by far the most pathetic attempt I've seen yet," She taunted as she summoned the wands that had been dropped in the fall. When all five were accounted for she sighed in relief.

"Do you collection of imbeciles truly believe that you were the first to try this?" She was answered by groans from a pile of intertwined limbs. Now she couldn't let this opportunity pass her by. She casted a binding charm and a long red ribbon wrapped them tightly together. Satisfied that they were no longer a real threat, Daphne whistled over her shoulder.

A large gray owl flew out of the Owlery and landed on her shoulder. It playfully nipped at her finger as she petted its head. "That's a good girl. Be a dear and drop these wands into the center of the Black Lake. The owl gripped the wands in her talons and did as her Mistress commanded.

"There is a reason that I'm called the Ice Queen. In my second year Marcus Flint tried to drag me into an abandoned classroom and have his way with me. I froze one of his testicles off for the insult."

"That was you!"

"Yes Pansy that was me. Do you lot honestly think that I didn't see you glaring at me and Emma? None of you would last a week as a Death Eater. I hear that he's not a forgiving master. In case none of you were paying attention, a third front has presented itself in this war. I strongly suggest you think which one best complements you."

"My bloody arm is broken!"

"Good, let that be a lesson to you Crabbe," Daphne said as she walked past them. Vincent grabbed her ankle with his one good arm. With a flick from her wand, she sent a cutting curse across the back of his hand causing him to howl out in pain. Daphne never broke her stride, or bothered to give them a backwards glance. She would wait until she was safely in her common room before she would cancel the binding charm. They didn't deserve any mercy. She doubted that they planned to show her any.

"Nicely played," said a voice out of the darkness as Daphne stepped into what looked like an empty hall. She spun around quickly her wand pointing in the direction she heard the voice, the nastiest curse she could think of on her lips. For the first time she showed fear in her face. Whoever just spoke to her had managed to get past all the survival skills she had honed for the last six years. All she could see was darkness.

"Good reflexes too." Sirius stepped out into the light grinning at her. The fear drained out of her face and was replaced by worry. She was sure she would be expelled by breakfast, but he just kept smiling at her with what looked like admiration. Like earlier that day, his eyes glassed over for a second and then they had that intense focus again.

"My Lady," Sirius said as he offered her an arm. She smiled back and gave a small curtsy, as she took his hint. He would come back later and make sure that they never attempted to bring harm to her again. He could smell that at least two of them had taken the mark.

"You are too kind my Lord." Daphne hooked her arm in his, but kept her wand in her free hand. Sirius chuckled to himself and shook his head. Just like your mum.

"You're not taking me to Dumbledore?" She asked when he directed them towards her common room.

"Why would I do that? I meant what I said. You handled that perfectly. They underestimated you and you took full advantage of it. They were planning to do far worse to you. The big stupid one was planning on raping you. I would say they got off light."

"He's been after me for the last four years. Unlike Pansy, I just don't bend over and take it on command. As you said he's big and stupid. I am curious just how you knew that though?"

"Trade secret my dear, trade secret," Sirius said as he tapped his nose with a finger and gave her a wink. He smelled that the boy's pheromone level was off the chart.

"Just so you know Lord Black, I'm very good at uncovering secrets. In fact, I already know you and my mum were lovers," She said with a grin of her own. Sirius snapped his head at her and came to a complete stop. She stopped and looked back at him.

"I can't believe she told you about that?"

"She only said you were a bedroom kisser, I bluffed...you confirmed." Daphne batted her eyes over her shoulder at Sirius. "I told you I was good."

"Your mum's going to kill me."

"Hopefully, not before I uncover all your secrets Lord Black."

"Well then I guess the game is afoot."

"Were you following them or me?"

"Trick me once, shame on you. Trick me twice, shame on me"

"Clever. Thank you for letting me handle that."

"How does one learn to survive in a war if someone else fights their battles for them?"

"Bold teaching strategy...and if they had gotten the upper hand?"

"Crabbe Junior would have lost both his testicles."

"Sweet...disturbing...but sweet, you're not like any Professor I've had before."

"I'll take that as a complement."

"It was meant as one."

"Well now my hearts all a flutter."

"I see where Harry gets his cheekiness from. Care to tell me just how you and my mum got together?"

"Well, if memory serves. I all started with the Marauder's Infamous Hufflepuff Knickers Raid of 1975. "

Emma hadn't felt this good in years. She expected Harry to be mad at her for being so foolish. He was furious, but it wasn't aimed at her. If anything it made her feel very safe and protected, something that she had never really felt before. She knew she should feel pity for the three Slytherins that were going to be getting their comeuppance in spades. She just couldn't bring herself to.

She was currently getting a piggyback ride to their Common Room by Harry, another thing that she had never gotten before. Not even realizing it, she had changed her hair to match his so much that it spiked in every direction like his did. Her eyes mimicked his emerald ones.

"James I see your sister goes here also. Well, Potters do belong in Gryffindor after all," The Fat Lady said as they approached her. Emma giggled in his ear at the portrait's mistake. Harry just shrugged it off. It was a minor annoyance and at the same time made him feel good that his dad had made such an impression that he was still remembered fondly.

"No prob`...Valor." The Fat Lady gave a nod and opened for them. Once inside Harry dropped down to one knee so she could slide off. Before she did, Emma gave Harry a very loud wet kiss on his cheek. "Thanks for the ride Big Bro." She teased him.

"Anytime, Cub," He shot back. "This weekend we're gonna get you a proper wand. On second thought...Hey Tease, come here a second!" Harry yelled at Ginny from across the room. Said girl was in what looked to be a very intense conversation with the Head Girl. Once Ginny saw Harry her face brightened up and she smiled vibrantly at him. Then she scowled mockingly at him as she tapped her index finger to her lips.

"First you have to use your sexy voice Git!" Ginny challenged him, drawing the attention of everyone that was currently in the common room. Someone wants to play.

"Come to me my pretty," Harry said in a strong Carpathian accent as he curled his fingers in a come-hither fashion. Ginny cocked a brow at him, but crossed her arms over her chest and remained seated.

"Seriously, my pretty? Come on Potter, you can do better than that," Ginny taunted.

"Come on Ginny you have to admit that accent was totally sexy," Hermione whispered in her ear.

"Shhh, Let him work for it," Ginny whispered back through the side of her mouth. Hermione laughed as she nodded her head in agreement. Harry then gave her a look that made her toes curl.

"Come to me my temptress of the night so I may worship at your temple, for the Moon rises to your beauty and sets at your grace." This time he used an Italian accent as he got down on one knee and produced a single red rose out of thin air.

"You got her on the ropes." Emma snickered, to which Harry shushed her. Ron took two steps towards Harry, but was stopped in his tracks by a warning glare from Hermione and a wand pointed to his nether regions. Dean and Seamus flanked him and started to give commentary on the battle of wills. None of which Ron found very funny, unlike the rest of the common room.

"You don't expect me to walk across that pile of shite in these new pumps do you?" Ginny mocked Harry. Secretly it was all she could do to not run into his arms and snog him senseless. It wasn't his words that moved her, but the sincerity in his voice.

"Then jump. I'll catch you." Harry urged her with his trademark grin. She decided to humor him and hopped. Harry quickly waved his wand and sent a silent charm at her. An unseen magic pulled her to him. The magic she felt around her was not abrasive, but comforting, gentle, and left her panting. As good as his word she landed in his arms. "Told ya."

"Git."

"Tease."

"Oh just snog him already, you know you want to," Emma added. Ginny saw that she made a good point, She shrugged and took her advice, but not before she tapped her wand to Harry's nose, thus stopping him from accessing his Animagus sense of smell. He gave her a questioning look and she shot him a silent later expression. She captured his lips with her own and melted into the kiss. Catcalls erupted in the common rooms, but neither of them paid much attention to it as they got lost in the moment.

"Oi, I don't want to be seeing any of that!" Ron yelled from across the room.

"Then don't look ya prat!" Emma yelled at him. Harry held out his hand and Emma high-fived him, all the while not breaking the kiss. When Ron glared at her, she stuck her tongue out at him.

"Was there a reason you called me over other than the snog git?" Ginny asked when they finally broke.

"Oh yeah, I need my trench coat for a second," Harry told her and she took it off and handed it to him. He opened it so the black underlinement was showing to Emma. He reached his hand inside it. It rippled like water and his hand to his forearm disappeared. Emma's eyes about popped out of her head. A second later Harry pulled his arm out with a golden Snitch in his hand. He set it loose and it flew off, then he addressed Emma.

"It's a little cold at first but there is nothing to fear, see my arms still attached. Now I want you to reach inside and think that you need a wand that will work for you best," Harry encouraged her. Even with Harry assurances she was a bit hesitant. Ginny saw that and reached inside without hesitation. Half of her arm disappeared, only to reappear a second later with a quill. She tickled Emma under her chin with it. She giggled and quickly swatted it away.

"I would never let anything bad happen to you," Harry added. Emma nodded and summed up her Gryffindor courage. She closed her eyes and plunged her arm into his trench coat. Her eyes shot open when she felt something in her hand. She felt power from it flow into every part of her body. She quickly pulled it out to see a 10 inch willow wand in her hand.

"I take it you can feel the magic?" Harry asked Emma. She just nodded her head with her mouth hanging open. Her whole body was tingling, as her hair turned dark red.

"Well, give it a wave," Ginny urged her. Emma complied and red sparks flew across the room, as her hair flew back as if it was hit with a mighty gust of wind. The air around her body crackled as her Magical Core expanded and bonded with her new wand.

"Cool." was all the young Metamorphmagus managed to get out. Ginny saw Harry's eyes widen when he got a good look at the wand in Emma's hand. He quickly looked away from her, but she could see the wheels turning as he was working something out in his head. His left hand was clenched into a fist for a few seconds and then he relaxed it. When he looked back at Emma he was his usual cheerful self.

"That was my starter wand. It's really good with charms," Harry told her. Later he would tell her that it had the restrictions on it removed, but it would be where no one could overhear. The Head Girl was paying too close attention for his liking. He had a feeling she was a stickler for the rules. Harry planned to break her of that habit. She and the others would have to be deprogrammed from Dumbledore's controlling influences. They still believed him to be what he portrayed to the public. Perhaps he was a good man once upon a time, but he had put those days to his back long ago.

"Thank you Harry," Emma said as she gave him a huge hug. He kissed the top of her head and she tightened the hug. When she looked up she saw Ginny was smiling at her, and then she gave her a little wink. She had never felt so accepted in all her life. She wondered when it was all going to fall through, like it always did with her. Harry felt her tense up and pulled her up so she was looking in his eyes.

"I'll never be too busy for you Cub," He told her as if he had read her mind. She shook her head in understanding, as her voice seemed to have failed her. "Now, why don't you go show off your new wand to your friends over there? Mark hasn't stopped looking at you since we came in. Besides, I have to get a few things straight with Ginny's overprotective brother."

"Later Kiddo," Ginny added as she walked away.

"Bye Ginny, try to keep him out of trouble," Emma said over her shoulder. Mark met her half way, followed closely by Pursa and Gabby. Squealing and giggling could be heard as they made their way to an empty couch.

"Poor Mark, that's a whole lot of estrogen in one spot," Harry joked and got a slap on the arm from Ginny, and then she pulled him close and whispered so no one could hear. "What the hell was that look about?"

"Caught that did you? Might be coincidence...might be something more. I need to talk to Nymphy first and I'll require proof, but if I'm right he's a dead man." Harry growled through clenched teeth. Ginny ran a hand across her back in an attempt to calm him down a bit. At first it didn't seem to have any effect on his brooding, but slowly his body started to relax. "Thanks Darlin', I needed that."

"Anytime Luv," Ginny said as she gave him a quick peck on the cheek. They enjoyed the quiet moment before the storm.

"Come on let's deal with your brother. I'm starting to think that I'm going to meet every member of your family before the day's done." Harry and Ginny started to walk over to Hermione and a very sour faced Ron.

"Merlin, I hope not. I'll probably be getting a Howler from mum tomorrow."

"Is she really that far up their butts?"

"She's got it into her mind that Longbottom is my destiny, and she holds onto an idea like a Goblin holds onto a galleon."

"What about your dad?"

"He's not so blind, but he keeps his opinion to himself. He just lets the twins do his dirty work for him." She sounded disappointed as she told him. Harry guessed her mum was one piece of work.

"Good to know." Harry and Ginny stopped just as they heard Hermione whisper to Ron to behave. Dean and Seamus were sitting at a table not too far off, but close enough to jump in and break things up if it got out of hand. On a couch close by, Lavender and Parvati held their wands in their hands, though they were well hidden. Harry got the feeling that they formed a tight knit group that looked out for each other. From what he had heard about the happenings over the last few years, he could see why. He was the outsider here and would have to prove himself to them. He would have to deal with this differently than he did with her other brothers. Harry went to cast a charm to ensure their privacy, but Hermione beat him to it. He took note of it and gave her an affirming nod.

"Hi my name is Harry. We must have missed each other last night," Harry offered his hand to Ron with a smile. Ron made no attempt to shake Harry's hand; instead he crossed his arms over his chest and huffed out.

"Ronald! That was rude. He's a Noble Lord, show some respect." Hermione scolded her boyfriend. Ron's face reddened considerably, but he held his stance.

"Please, I only expect annoying Headmasters and uptight Purebloods to call me that. So, please call me Harry. Occasionally Git if I have it coming."

"No. only I get to call you that. They can call you Prat and you always have that coming," Ginny teased, as she bumped his hip with her own.

"I noticed that you call my little sister Tease. Did she earn that name as well?" Ron challenged as he took a step towards Harry. Hermione gasped at his comment.

"And what the hell is that supposed to mean?" Ginny yelled as she shot daggers at Ron.

"It means that Mum would never buy or let you wear an outfit like that, so he obviously got it for you. The two of you can't seem to go for a few seconds without touching each other. Use your head Ginny! Because of that Law he can have himself a nice little harem. You may be a Pureblood, but you come from a poor family and you don't even have a title to offer. He just wants you to be one of his whores, and by the way you're dressed your half way the-"

CRACK!

Ron's jaw broke in two places as Harry's fist smashed into his face. Before Ron was on the flat of his back, Dean and Seamus were on their feet. Lavender and Parvati had their wands drawn, but were conflicted as to which one to curse. Was it Harry out of loyalty to Ron or Ron because he certainly had that one coming? Seamus waved to hold them off. Harry grabbed Ron by the shirt and pulled him up until his face was inches away from Harry's.

"Let's get a few things straight Weasley. The only reason you're still conscience is because I want you to apologize to your sister. I may use my title to achieve my goals, but I wasn't raised a pampered Princess like Longbottom. My mother happens to be Muggle-born and my father married her because he loved her. When I marry, it will for the same reason. A wise witch once told me to love only one woman and with all my heart. I intend to do just that. I'm not going to lie to you. The thought of having a harem did cross my mind for more than a few moments. Two years ago I would have jumped at the chance.

One night changed that for me. A year and a half ago, I saw a half naked witch that had endured the worst kind of torture you could possibly imagine. She barely had any blood left from all the runes they carved into her. She could have curled up and accepted her fate, but she chose to fight back with what little strength she had left. She's the bravest person I've ever met and every time I look at her

she takes my breath away. You should have heard Lestrangle squeal like a pig when she hit her with the nastiest Bat-Boogey I've ever seen. That woman is standing right behind me and she is more precious to me than my own life. Believe me when I say that if you ever disrespect her again, they will never find your body." Harry spoke slowly and purposely to Ron. Everyone that was inside the silencing bubble was shocked by what Harry had just said. He had only wanted Ron to hear that, but what started off as a sneer ended up as a declaration.

Ginny walked over to Harry and cupped his face in her hands. Looking deeply into his emerald eyes she asked. "Do you really mean that?" She tried her best to keep all the raw emotion she was feeling at that moment out of her voice.

"Did you think I fought my way through thirty Orcs just for a quick shag?" The tenderness in Harry's voice sent her over the edge. Ginny pulled him to her and kissed him with everything she had. She ran her hands wildly in his forever tousled hair. One of his hands found the small of her back and pulled her close. It took all of Harry's will power to not head south. He had become very fond of the delicious curves of her body, but knew they were far from alone. His other hand slid up her spine slowly and sent shivers throughout Ginny's entire body. She moaned into the kiss as he ran his fingers through her hair as well.

While Lavender and Parvati were sighing at the Ginny's good fortune, Hermione walked over to Ron. Seamus and Dean had just helped him up. She didn't say a word as she healed his broken jaw, but her disapproval was written all over her face. Once she was sure his jaw was completely fixed, she slapped him hard across the face.

"How dare you speak to Ginny like that? After everything she's been through. How could you?" Hermione was on the verge of tears as she finished. Ron showed no emotion at what she just did to him. He expected it. Instead he looked at his sister and a huge smile ran across his face. Hermione saw nothing but pride and love in his eyes.

"Did he tell you everything you needed to know mate?" Dean asked Ron. He worked his jaw around to make sure it still worked properly before he answered.

"Yea, I'm good with it. Love the outfit by the way Ginny. In fact, tell me where you got it. Mione would look damn sexy in it." All the girls' mouths dropped open at his statement. Ginny turned to look at Ron with utter shock. She had lived in a house full of boys her whole life, and this still shocked her. The boys, Harry included started to laugh, which confused the girls even more.

"He wasn't insulting you Ginny, he was testing Harry," Seamus explained in a strong Irish accent.

"Yeah, if Harry just stood there and let me rag on you, he was either scared of me or didn't give a shite about you. Whichever way, he wasn't good enough for you. You deserve the best Sis. It's my duty as a big brother to make sure you get it." Ron clarified his thinking for the confused girls.

"It's a guy thing," Harry added over Ginny's shoulder.

"Boys?" Hermione, Ginny, Lavender, and Parvati groaned out and rolled their eyes in unison.

"If all that is settled, There is something I would like to ask Harry." Hermione was the first of the girls to recover.

"Well, fire away." Harry told her with a grin. He plopped down on an empty seat and Ginny hopped on his lap without thinking twice about it. Hermione took note of how comfortable they were with each other. She would never have done that with Neville even back when she still liked him.

"Well you see we sort of have this little group. It called the DA. We train to fight You-Know-Who and his followers. Occasionally, we get Professors to help us, but mostly we have Neville teach us what Dumbledore has taught him. You're not taking DADA with your Godfather, so I'm guessing you know loads more than is taught in class."

"Your right Tease, she is sharp as a tack. Well first off, you have gotta stop calling that snake-faced ass wipe You-Know-Who. It gives him power over you. Don't call him Voldemort either, he doesn't deserve that respect. My favorite is Butthead, but Tommyboy is starting to grow on me. If you truly want to fight him, you have to

change the way you think. He's just a man; he bleeds just like everyone else. Just out of curiosity, what does the DA stand for?"

"Dumbledore's Army," Hermione told him. Harry's face soured immediately.

"Then my answer will be no. I was raised to be a General, not a soldier. The name suggests servitude to him, and that is something that I will never do."

"What did he do to make you hate him so much?" Ron asked him.

"Do you trust them Ginny?" Harry asked her in a concerned voice.

"With my life," She told him without hesitation.

"Then, they need to know everything."

"NO!"

"Darlin, I know this is highly personal to you, but they need to know what were up against. They need to make an informed decision." Harry urged her.

"What if he gets into their heads?"

"Then I'll put a Guardian in their heads until they've mastered Occlumency, like I did with you. If they don't want to help, I'll just Oblivate them. Either way we'll know where they stand," Harry whispered to her.

"Okay, but not here. Someplace more secure."

"My trunk's the most secure place...and I'm sure the girls would love to pick some outfits of their own."

"You're gonna spoil them aren't you?"

"Yep"

A/N: Well there you go. Sorry if it was a little late. I was doing errands last week and came home to my garage raining. A thousand dollar deductible, and two days to dry out my bedroom and

bathroom. Reviews are food for the soul. Let me know what you think.

It been about thirty minutes now. Don't you think it's about time the girls came out of the closet?" Seamus asked Harry. There was silence for about ten seconds before Harry, Ron, and Dean busted out laughing at Seamus's comment. They were currently sitting in Harry's living room cracking jokes and getting to know their host better. Ron was thoroughly enjoying the ice cold soda that Harry had given him. He damn near shot it out his nose at what was said.

"I so love the mental picture I'm getting right now," Dean said between laughing and trying to breath.

"Hey! That's my girlfriend and sister in there!" Ron bellowed at Dean.

"Yeah they're both smokin hot! Lav and Parvati are both damn good kissers too. What? Never underestimate an Irishman with mistletoe."

"That's cheating," Harry said.

"Don't care."

"Yeah he has to go with his strength,.." Dean shot out, which brought another round of laughter. Once they regained some control over themselves, Ron looked over his shoulder to make sure the door was closed before asking Harry a question.

"There is one thing that I've been dying to know since last night Harry?"

"What's that Ron?"

"Just what things can a Succubus do with their tails?" Ron asked as he leaned forward to hear the answer. Seamus and Dean leaned forward as well.

"Holy Shite! Is that even legal?" Could be heard in the closet and all four of the girls recognized Seamus's strong Irish accent, even if it was muffled.

"What was that about?" Parvati asked. All of the girls were in different stages of undress, as they tried on different dresses. Lavender was the one least shy about her half naked body being seen by the boys. She marched over to the door leading to the living room.

"Lav what are you doing? You're only in your bra and knickers!" Hermione shrieked at her.

"Oh please, I've worn skimpier bathing suits," Lavender said over her shoulder as she swung the door open. "Honestly, can't we leave you alone for ten seconds before you start talking about sex?" She scolded them with one of her hands on her hip.

Everyone of them looked at her with shock at what she was, or not wearing. Each one of them reacted differently. Seamus quickly looked at his feet, but occasionally would sneak a quick peek at her. Ron knew better and kept his eyes anywhere but looking in her direction. Harry leaned back in his chair and put his hands behind his head. He seemed completely unfazed by her state of undress. Though he was looking at her, his eyes showed no change in how he viewed her. She had to admit she was a little insulted by it. Dean however was looking her top to bottom, as if she was the last meal he would ever eat. Pig!

"Well, it's been more like thirty minutes," Harry told her in an amused voice.

"There are a lot of cloths to choose from," Lavender said in their defense. "We've got it narrowed down to at least ten outfits each."

"Perhaps you need a male's point of view?" Harry suggested with a raised brow.

"You gits just want to perv on us," She said as she matched his hoisted brow with one of her own.

"Right and you're not out here flaunting your natural assets? I would say it's a win/win situation. We get to bask in you ladies' alluring beauty, and you get to know what looks best on you."

Lavender mulled it over for a few seconds before answering him. "Pretty words but your still perving, but I'll go ask the girls what they think. Do us a favor and keep Thomas in a leash. He's starting to drool." She then whipped around and left the room with a sway in her hips.

"That was just cruel," Dean said as he admired her walk and the thong leaving the room.

"Do us a favor and adjust mate. No one needs to see that." Seamus said as he pointed at Dean's lap. That brought another round of laughter.

For the next twenty minutes the girls put on a fashion show. Hermione was a little hesitant at first, but after seeing her boyfriend's reaction to some of her choices she got in to it. She was shaking her arse and giving Ron a wink every time she left the room. Harry leaned back and enjoyed watching everybody laughing and enjoying themselves. For the moment they were just normal teenagers without a care in the world. At that moment the War and everything else didn't exist.

"This should be norm not the exception," Harry told Ginny as she sat down on his lap.

"I know luv, I know. Let's make it so the next generation never knows it."

After depositing five bruised and thoroughly humiliated Slytherins in the hospital wing, Sirius found himself walking down an all too familiar hallway. Thoughts of Daphne's mum kept invading his mind. He stopped and leaned against a wall as he remembered the night she caught him.

I was running down an empty hall as fast as I could, with Filch hot on my arse. We had just pulled off by far the best prank yet. James and I had been planning it all summer break. We were going to start our fifth year with a bang and boy did we.

We had just successfully fooled the enchantments on the stairs leading to the girl's dorm. Hell, we snuck into the Hufflepuff Tower, and let me tell you there was a fine crop of lovely young witches in that house. Of course James was still drooling over Evans, and as usual she shot him down in flames.

Dumbledore thought that making Remus a Prefect would keep us in check. Old bird is off his rocker. Marauders stand together always. Well, not at the moment. Bloody Peeves! We just had to run into him.

We were almost back to our common room. We were forced to split up to get back.

Now I got Filch half way up my arse and let me tell you the old codger is a lot faster than he looks. If I can just make it to the next hall, there's an old tapestry that hides a secret passage. In thirty seconds I'll be home free. That's when I turned a corner, and my life as I knew it changed.

CRASH!

"Ow! Look where you going!" Said a pretty blond witch, she was a Slytherin I think. We both ended on the floor. And let me tell you the view was heavenly. That was when I saw the Prefect Badge and knew my goose was cooked. She grabbed a hand full of my hair and pulled my head back

"Enjoying the view you prat?" She snarled at me.

"Why yes I was." I answered her with a grin. I don't know how she did it, but in the blink of an eye she had me on my back, arms pinned, and her wand at my throat, and looking damn sexy in the process. Remus is right I need help.

"What do you want your epitaph to read Black?" She warned me through clenched teeth. I smiled even bigger and said. "He went with a smile." She rolled her eyes at that, but I saw the corners of her full lips curve upwards for a second. We were having a moment and I was thoroughly enjoying it, even if she was a Slytherin. Of course that was when we heard Filch coming in our direction. Dammit! I'm nicked for sure now.

"My my, someone's been a naughty boy hasn't he?" She asked with a predatorial smile, and why is it turning me on? Before I could answer she pulled me up off of the floor and shoved me into a broom closet. Talk about close, I heard Filch outside the closet.

"Girl! You see one of those damn Marauders come this way?"

"My name happens to be Gabriella Drake and I'm a Slytherin Prefect. Not...girl."

"I don't have time for this. Those unruly brats just broke into the Hufflepuff Tower and had a knicker raid! They'll be expelled for sure this time. Now, have you seen any of them pass this way or not?"

"You need some instruction in proper conversation etiquette squib. However, I was taught properly, so to answer your ruefully asked question, no."

"Are you lying to me girl?"

"Why would I protect a bunch of rule breaking Gryffindors, and if you call me girl one more time, I'll hex you myself."

"Baaa!" Filch grumbled out as he took off in another direction. After a few moments the door opened and the cute blond was giving me one of those looks that Evans always gives James. That was usually followed by a hex being thrown at him. That was when I realized that I must have dropped my wand in the fall. I started to look around for my wand.

"Searching for this," Gabriella asked as she twirled my wand on her free hand. "Or this?" She produced the pair of knickers I nicked earlier and spun it around the end of my wand.

"Hey those are mine," I said as I reached for them. She stepped back out of my reach and put her wand to my throat. Why does she keep doing that to me?

"Well, you're only getting one for now. You will get the other when you properly apologize to that poor girl you stole these from." With a wave of her wand the knickers went from the tip of, my wand, to my head, like it had a life of its own. My wand she dropped down the front of her shirt.

"You take those off and I scream," Gabriella warned me when I went to take it off my head. I really didn't want Filch and any of the professors descending on us. I held up my hands in surrender. So she wanted to take the mickey out of me, can't begrudge her that. It's not like I can't take them off later. I never saw her cast the sticking charm. She's good.

"That's a good boy," She teased in a voice like she was talking to a family pet. Oh, if you only knew. "Now, I'm gonna escort you back to your common room, just so you don't get into anymore trouble."

"Your letting me go?" I really need to learn to not look a gift horse in the mouth.

"Sure, why not," She said with a shrug, as we started down the hall. I reveled in my good fortune, as we continued in silence. That was until my curiosity got the better of me, plus I like the sound of her voice. Don't ask me why, because it beats the hell out of me.

"Why didn't you turn me over to Filch?"

"And let the first born of the House of Black, be caught by a squib. Oh, the indignity of it all." Sometimes it pays to be a Pureblood.

"Kind of cheeky for a Slytherin."

"How would you know? Your lot doesn't associate with us, we being evil and all."

"That goes both ways darlin. Your lot doesn't exactly bellow out welcome you know."

"Perhaps you just need to listen better." I stop and look at back at her. There was something in her voice that caught my attention.

"Maybe I will."

"Well, that just makes my day sunshine and lollypops," She said trying to make light of the direction the conversation was going. I'm not exactly known for having deep thoughts, but my gut told me to not let this go. I take step towards her and into her personal space. She had a lot of defenses up and I needed to keep her of balance if I wanted an honest answer.

"Why are you really helping me?" I ask her. She took a step towards me and closed the gap. There is intensity in her eyes. She's not backing down to my intrusion into her domain, letting me know she won't be unnerved by me. It would be really irritating if it wasn't for the fact that she smelled so damn good.

"It's kind of hard to be intimidated when you have a pair of knickers on your head," She said in an amused voice. I take a step closer and she holds her ground defiantly.

"You think I'm not dangerous?"

"Oh, I know your dangerous Black. Only a fool would believe you weren't, with all the stunts that you and your friends pull off. Though most of them are childish and idiotic in nature, like tonight, it doesn't change the fact that you invaded another house and fooled an enchantment that was cast by Rowena Ravenclaw herself. If you put that creative mind of yours to something more productive there is nothing you could not accomplish." She took one last step into me and I could feel the warmth of her breath on my cheek as she leans in and whispered in my ear. "But if you ever try to nick my knickers. This will never function properly again." I felt the tip of her wand on my boys. She raised her eye brows as a warning and a challenge. She really shouldn't give me goals. I am a Marauder after all.

Sirius didn't even realize that he was sitting on the floor. He reluctantly was pulled back into the present by a bright light from the end of the hallway. Slowly it got bigger and brighter, until he had to squint to look at it.

The silvery Patronus of a big Grim stood next to him and licked his cheek. A soft voice he hadn't heard in over seventeen years spoke in a loving whisper. "I've missed you Siri."

"I've missed you too Luv," Sirius said as he reached out to touch it, but it dissolved into nothing before he could.

Malfoy and Greyback were dragged into Voldemort's Throne Room and dropped at his feet. He looked down on them with disgust. They were once very promising Death Eaters, but now they had proven to be just another disappointment. It seemed that most of his truly gifted Death Eaters had died in the previous war, or had rotted away for so long in Azkaban that they lost what they once were.

The exception to that was Bellatrix Lestrange. If anything she had blossomed in the vile place. She held a special place that none have ever been able to or would ever fill. True last year she let the Weasley girl be rescued, but she was one of the few to survive the Shadow Fiend's attack. So many Death Eaters were slaughtered by

the beast. That in itself was extraordinary. Her knowledge of Dark Rituals was only surpassed by his own. That alone made her invaluable to him. The wild unconventional sex they had was just a bonus. What would break a common witch's body and mind was mere foreplay to her. His sweet Bella was far from common. She was exceptionally exquisite. He would have to make time to revisit that particular aspect of her servitude very soon.

"Ah Lucius, You survived the pit yet again. Perhaps next time it will be 24 hours instead of just a measly 12." Voldemort taunted. Malfoy showed no reaction to what he said. He knew better than to beg for forgiveness. The Dark Lord was incapable of such a thing. He had failed his master and had been punished for it. To accept the punishment without lowering himself further was something that Voldemort would respect.

"Thank you My Lord for the instruction. I will not fail you again."

"We shall see Lucius, we shall see. And what of you Fenrir, have you also learned the price of failure?"

"Yes My Lord."

"As a whole it wasn't a complete failure. We reclaimed sixty-two percent of our gold. However! The mindless Witches and Wizards that blindly follow that old fool Dumbledore and the idiots at the Ministry should be hiding under their wives skirts in fear of my might. Should they not Bellatrix?" Voldemort added the last part as he saw her enter the room.

"Yes my Lord, they should indeed. You summoned me my Lord?" Bellatrix asked as she bowed to her Master and lover. Her jaw was clinched tight to keep from crying out from the pain of the act of devotion. Voldemort took notice and sighed slightly. He did so love watching how people handled pain.

"Yes Bella we will talk of it later, but first we will hear Lucius explain why I should let him live. Now, weren't my instructions simple enough? Take back what was ours. Kill Ragnok and as many Goblins as possible, leave Gringotts in shambles, take some children to ransom and experiment on. What part seemed difficult to you? You were given a troop of trolls, orcs, and gargoyles to achieve that goal, were you not? Now Rookwood and his team are dead,

Potter still has my property, and the Goblins have made an alliance with the Ministry. Crucio!" Malfoy withered under the unforgivable for a full minute, before his master lifted it.

"I-It w-was within my grasp my Lord, but-"

"But he wanted to gain your favor by capturing the Weasley bitch!" Greyback yelled. He wanted to make sure that Malfoy went down for this instead of him. Lucius shot him a venomous glare.

"She was there and you let a sixteen year old witch slip through your fingers." Voldemort snarled at him.

"It was the Shadow Fiend my Lord. It came to her rescue again. It slaughtered the orcs like they were fledglings. We barely escaped with our lives My Lord."

"I find it odd that the beast would come to her rescue a second time," Bellatrix said in an uneasy voice. She had almost lost her life to the beast. If it wasn't for Greyback she would have, a fact he brings to her attention every chance he gets. "And still the supposed greatest werewolf of them all ran with his tail between his legs."

"It was broad daylight woman! In the light of a full moon, I would destroy it."

"That beast has been a thorn in our sides for too long. It must be eliminated," Lucius said.

"There is more to it than that. That little blood traitor reeked of it," Fenrir added.

"I thought it was linked to Bella's half-blooded niece?" Voldemort asked. "Whenever it attacked she was always present. You now say it came to her rescue twice. That is very interesting. It seems that little Ginny Weasley has a protector. Have our spies at Hogwarts keep a keen eye on her. I want her in my possession by the end of the year and with her virtue intact. Also have the dark creatures in the Forbidden Forest to keep a lookout for the beast. If she is linked to it, then it would probably be close by. Perhaps she will be the key to controlling it. Congratulations Lucius, you live yet again. I want a detailed report on what happened today. Bella come and walk with me. We have much to discuss, and I have a present for you."

"Yes my Lord," She said as she followed her master out of the room. They continued down the hall in silence. She knew better than to initiate a conversation with Voldemort. He was the Dark Lord. If he wanted to talk to you, it was for him to decide. She had learned her place long ago. Down a long narrowed stair case they descended into the bowels of the old castle.

"What you did yesterday was foolish Bella." Voldemort voice was calm and void of any emotion. She evoked that to be good sign.

"I let my anger rule my mind and my actions brought shame to myself and your noble cause. I humbly request forgiveness and eagerly await you punishment my Lord."

"Now, now, Bella. We both know standard punishment would only arouse you. Besides I know that it must be very painful for you to even walk. The curse your cousin hit you with was meant to rot away your organs from within. Very old and dark magic, Egyptian I believe. You must have wronged him terribly for him to curse you so venomously."

"It wasn't my cousin that cursed me. It was Potter."

"Now isn't that intriguing? It takes an immense amount of hate directed at the victim for the curse to work properly. It is not a curse one uses in battle, especially when outnumbered. It is a heavy drain on one's magic and leaves you venerable for a short while."

"Had I not recognized the curse, it would most surely had killed me. A few more minutes and I would have been beyond saving."

"He wanted you to die a slow and painful death to be sure. Plus the knowing that you were helpless against your fate, such cruelty suggests it was exceedingly personal. I must confess that I'm curious. Have you ever captured and tortured his mother?"

"No, for a Mudblood, Lily Potter was an exceptional duelist. Back then we were too evenly matched. We clashed a few times; regrettably I could never get the upper hand. Plus Potter was always close by. They were a very lethal duo."

"So where does this need for vengeance come from I wonder?"

"He most defiantly doesn't follow Dumbledore's code of conduct in battle that much is for sure."

"Ha, ha, ha, he is far more deadly than Longbottom could ever hope to be. Ah, old man I do believe that you bet on the wrong boy," Voldemort said more to himself, but Bellatrix heard every word. She was sure this had to do with the Prophecy. "I believe I've finally found a worthy adversary. He has positioned his players very well. We have lost our hold over the Mystery, our funds have been constricted and the public has found their backbone, and all in the span of a single day. The first battle unfortunately has gone to him, but we shall learn from what transpired today. When next our sides clash the outcome will be very differently my young opponent. For what you have taken, I shall reclaim, and what you cherish will be mine to destroy." He was so lost in thought that he had forgotten that his most loyal servant was beside him. His mind was a hundred places at once. He need time to rebuild his fallen troops, and this time he would be properly training them. Intel on Potter and Black would be the highest priority. He stopped at Lab 5 and released the wards that he had personally placed on the room. Bellatrix knew that whatever laid on the other side of the door was of the highest security. She took much pride in the fact that her master trusted her with such a thing. With a wave of his hand the door open on its own accord. What awaited her was not what she expected.

"Ah Wormtail, for a mediocre wizard at best, you have succeeded where my most promising followers have failed. You may choose from Rookwood's stock of cultivated harlots. Consider it a gift for faithful and competent service. Your Lord always rewards those that have not failed him. Also bring another for Bella, she shall need an assistant for the task I have for her."

"Yes my Lord, I live to serve your greatness," Peter said as he put down the book he was reading. He bowed his head to him, never daring to meet his gaze. Bellatrix looked at the pudgy man with disgust. His cloths were covered in dirt and mud. He was sporting some very nasty looking cuts and several bruises. He belonged in a sewer for he truly was a rat. Pettigrew smiled at her in a mocking tone and it took all of her self-control not to curse him. Voldemort paid no attention to them as he circled the table that housed a dead body under a ratty old sheet. Bellatrix noticed the gleam in his eyes as he did so. It was like a child on Christmas morning.

"Why would I need the services of a wanton whore if you wish me to make another Inferius My Lord?" Bellatrix asked him, but the man just shook his head.

"No, no, no, Bella, I have an army of those. What I have planned for him is much more creative than that, and her field of expertise will soon become very apparent. Let me introduce you to...well what we are about to embark on has yet to be given a name. If you are successful, I'll let you name it. For now, let me reintroduce you to Lord James Potter." Voldemort announced with a flair for the dramatic that would have made Gilderoy Lockhart proud. He pulled the sheet off the table to reveal the corpse of the said man.

A preserving charm must have been placed on him, for he was in good shape for a man that had been dead for sixteen years. If she would have to hazard a guess, she would put her gold on Remus Lupin. Werewolf he may be, it made him no less a gifted Wizard.

"What am I suppose to do with this dead Blood Traitor my Lord?" LeStrange asked as if she had the taste of something foul in her mouth.

"All in good time sweet Bella, all in good time. For now concentrate on regenerating his body. It is imperative that all his organs work properly. If nothing else that must come to pass." The tone of his voice made it clear that failure would not be tolerated. She noticed that he was twirling the ring they used to bring him back on his finger. With that he left LeStrange and Pettigrew with the dead Lord Potter. Bellatrix took a long breath to center herself. She had a feeling it would be a long time before she would see the light of day. She snapped her head at Pettigrew and snarled.

"Before you go off to soil that unfortunate strumpet, I have work for you to do. Fetch me some parchment and a quill you imbecile. You're going to get me everything on this list or I will make you little broom rot off." Bellatrix scorned Peter. He quickly returned with what she ordered. She quickly wrote down what she would need to start off with.

"Be gone worm!" She yelled at him, as she shoved the parchment into Peter's hands and the little vermin scurried from the room. Glad

to be rid of him, the evil Witch started to circle around her new pet project.

"Well Jimmy, may I call you Jimmy? I guess it doesn't really matter now does it? Even rotting as you is, you're a sight better company than that traitorous little rat, wouldn't you say?" Bellatrix paused for a moment as if she had expected him to answer. She was met with deafening silence.

"Right you are Jimmy, right you are. We are going to get along famously. Just as long as you remember who the head-bitch-in-charge is. Now I know that you Potters like that exotic redhead type, but some traditions were made to be broken. I understand young men like to sow their oats, but to actually marry some low class Mudblood skank? I am somewhat disappointed in you." Again she was met with silence.

"Yes I'm sure she let you do many scandalous things to her. But a Mudblood will always pale in comparison to a Pureblood in the bedroom." *****

"Of course I forgive you. I am a very compassionate woman..." And so Bellatrix continued her one-sided conversation with a dead man deep into the night.

They all followed Harry into a large empty room. On the far side of the room was a large seven foot cabinet with about a hundred runes protruding from the doors. Around it was a white circle. A boundary of some sort Hermione theorized. Not too far off was a large pensieve.

"Don't cross the white line, it's warded," Harry warned as he walked up to the cabinet. He cut his thumb and started to rapidly touch some of the runes with it. Once his blood touched it the runes glowed and sunk into the door. A loud click sounded and acknowledged that the lock was disengaged. The huge doors opened up to reveal hundreds of small vials. Harry pulled out of his pocket the elegant looking vial and put it with a large number of similar looking vials.

Ginny recognized it immediately as the one Sahsa had given to him earlier that day. She felt a twinge of annoyance but pushed it away. Like Lily had told her, everyone has a past. Passion and desire they

had in abundance. Even after what he had said and done today, she knew that trust had to be cultivated slowly if it was to stand the test of time. It was a fragile thing, and could easily be shattered. Once gone, it a rarity to truly be reclaimed. He had never done anything for her to doubt his intentions. She may not have understood their relationship, but she had to respect it if they were going to make a go of this. Trust was a two-way street after all, and this was the first step in earning his as well. So for now she would let it go.

"Okay, I suppose we could tell you, but I think your own eyes should do that for us. This is a pensieve. Does anyone know what it does?" Harry asked them. Hermione's hand shot up in an instant. Harry fought back a hardy laugh. "We're not in class Hermione. Just shout them out if you know the answer."

"Trust me mate you don't want her shouting," Ron warned him. Hermione face turned red with embarrassment. Parvati came to her rescue and hit Ron in the back of his head.

"Ow! I didn't mean it like that."

"It was still bloody funny." Dean laughed out, with Seamus nodding his head in agreement. The girls were glaring at them. Harry guessed that she was the one they were talking about last night.

"Hermione, it's one of those stories that people tend to remember. You have to learn to laugh at yourself; or you'll end up in a straight-jacket. So let me be the first to say you have the nicest set of lungs in the school." There was total silence for ten very long seconds as they waited to see what Hermione would do. She narrowed her eyes at Harry.

"How do you get your hair to stand up like that, pee into a light socket?" Hermione asked in a fake sweet voice. Harry was the first to laugh.

"Good one. You rock girl." Harry beamed at her. She gave him a little curtsy, as the rest of them laughed.

"To answer your question, you put memories in it and can view it in a third person perspective." Ginny said. She wanted to get this over with.

"This one's slightly different. The runes that are carved into it are not human in origin. Let's just say it was a gift." Harry paused and looked back at the vial he had just placed in the cabinet. "From a very special and misunderstood species. This one projects it into this room so more than one person can view it, very useful in training."

"That would explain the runes on the walls," Lavender assessed.

"It also lets you see what was out of the person's line of sight. Don't ask me how. I was told not to, but just accept what is, as what is."

"So in theory, you could view the time we were trying on cloths to your heart's content you perv?" Ginny asked.

"In theory yes, in reality I was raised better than that," Harry said indignantly.

"Oh Harry, I was just kidding. I know you would never...YOU GIT!" Ginny saw the grin on his face and knew she had just been played.

"You're so cute when you're eating your new pumps." Harry laughed out then had to dodge a hex.

"Looks like the Tease can dish it out but can't take it," He taunted on the move narrowing avoiding another hex.

"Stand still and take your medicine Potter!" Ginny yelled as she shot three more at him. All of which never found their target.

"How did you learn to dodge like that mate?" Dean asked Harry.

"The hard way," Harry answered still on the move. Hermione went into full Head Girl mode and stepped between them.

"STOP! Honestly, it's like foreplay with you two! We're here for a reason if I recall." She scolded them.

"Sorry, your right. Okay, I think you should know the reason you risked your lives at the Ministry." Harry told them.

"You're talking about that prophecy?" Parvati asked. "We were never told what it said."

"Figures...These memories should tell you everything you need to know about me and why I hate that old man." Harry dropped the contents of one of the vials into the pensieve. They were instantly transported to what looked to be someone's living room. The front door busted open and a small boy dressed like Peter Pan ran into the room, followed closely by Professor Black dressed like Captain Hook.

"MOM! LOOK AT THE HAUL WE GOT THIS YEAR! MOM! MOM!" Harry yelled at a closed door. He looked to be six or seven. His smiling face quickly turned grim. He put his ear to the door. He could hear crying coming from the other side. He turned around and slid his back down the door until he was sitting. The tears that were running down his cheek and the anguish written across his face cut through all the girls' hearts. On the floor leaning against the door on the other side was a young Lily Potter. Photos were scattered around her and she was clinging to an old Gryffindor Quidditch jersey like her life depended on it. It had a Captains patch on it, and the name POTTER could be seen on the exposed back of the jersey.

"Why Padfoot? Why does she cry every Halloween?" Harry sobbed out. Sirius looked sadly at his Godson. He was hoping that she would have been done by the time they had gotten home. This day always hit her hard and he wanted to keep it from Harry as long as possible. By the look of it, that plan was just shot to hell. He slid down the door next to Harry.

"She's just missing your dad Pup. Just you watch she'll be right as rain by morning."

"I'm not stupid you know. Just tell me." Harry puffed out irritably. Sirius signed heavily. He knew this day would come sooner or later. He and Lily spent many long nights discussing this. They both agreed that when he asked they would tell him everything. They wouldn't do to him what Dumbledore did to them. Now the moment has arrived and all he wanted was for him to hold on to his childhood for a little bit longer. "This is about that bad man Voldy something, isn't it?"

On the other side of the door Lily stopped crying and looked over her shoulder. She quickly wiped the tears from her face that was sporting a determined look about it. She got on her knees and

opened the door. Harry and Sirius fell through the door into their backs. Lily let out a small laugh before she snatched her son up and gave him a fierce hug. A lone tear traveled down her cheek. It was Sirius that wiped it away this time. She looked up at him and had a silent conversation with Sirius. After a long moment she gave a hesitant nod.

"Luv, I want you to listen very carefully to everything we say, and wait until we're finished to ask any questions. Can you promise me that sweetheart?" Lily asked and Harry shook his head that he would. "That's my good little boy. First I want you to know that Padfoot and I love you very much and that none of this is your fault. The blame lies with two powerful old Wizards that think they're gods." Lily told him with a fire in her that Sirius hadn't seen in years. So they told him the sad tale of how his father saved their lives on this very night. They explained about the war and the prophecy, and how it pertained to him. All the while Lily held Harry tightly afraid to let him go. They talked about them going into hiding and lastly their betrayal by a friend.

Ginny wrapped her arms around the present Harry, as she watched his younger self's childhood evaporated. She tightened her grip on him until her's rivaled Lily's on the younger Harry.

"I'm so sorry Luv," She whispered into his neck. Harry held onto her to show his appreciation, because he didn't trust his voice at the moment. They stayed that way until the memory played out and they were once again in an open room. Harry broke from her and quickly retrieved the memory and locked it in the cabinet.

Hermione went to say something, but Harry cut her off before the words left her mouth. He motioned for Ginny to come over to the pensieve. She took a heavy breath and then did so.

"I'm not sure I can do this Luv?"

"They need to know what the so called righteous have done and how far our enemy will go."

"I don't want you to see that. I wasn't as brave as you think I am. I...I begged her to kill me."

"It changes nothing, but my desire to gut that bitch for ever touching you," Harry told her with complete honesty. She latched on to him and found the strength she needed.

"All right, but I won't stay in here and relive it. I don't want you to either. You already know most of it anyway. I need you to stay close...please?"

"All right, but Ron needs to see what Lestrangle did to you." She shook her head violently at what he just asked her. "You need to put your morality aside for a second and think about it. He needs to understand how bad it can get. That memory is the best example of that. I wish it wasn't, but we both know it is." Ginny buried her head into his chest and steadied herself. She didn't like it, but Ginny understood the logic in what he said.

"Okay, but just so you know he won't handle this well," Ginny warned him. She walked over to the pensieve and took a deep breath. Ginny focused on the memories that she wanted them to see and drew them out with her wand. She dropped the memories into the pensieve and bolted for the door, grabbing Harry's hand and taking him with her. Once the door shut behind them the room changed as her first memory started to play out. For the next forty minutes her friends and brother saw what she had to endure for the last couple of years. Her being controlled by the diary and her forced servitude based on a lie. All the times she had been given an attitude adjustment by the man they thought was a true pillar of light, her capture and Neville's cowardice. Then came the worst memory of them all.

Lestrangle revealed why the leaders of both side wanted her. Ron attacked the image of his sister's torturer. He passed through her and was forced to accept he couldn't protect his little sister. They saw her rescue and then her recovery. They saw the panther protector that watched over her through it all.

Then the event of today played out. Dumbledore trying to control her, and her fighting back. Her meeting with Dilys, and what happened at Gringotts.

When they emerged from the room, their somber faces looked upon something they never expected to see. Ginny was sitting on the couch, with a panther partially across her. The steady purr of the

beast was soothing her nerves as she ran her fingers through its black fur. The last piece of the puzzle was finally in place.

Upon seeing Ginny, Ron collapsed on the floor and screamed out in rage for what his sister had suffered, as an overpowering guilt consumed him. She was his responsibility, he was the older brother, and he failed her terribly. In an instant Harry changed back. Ginny was a blur of red as she flew across the room. Harry stepped between Ron and Hermione. He motioned for everyone to go into the kitchen. Hermione reluctantly complied. She knew that only Ginny could help him through this.

"M-my...fault...job...b-brother." Were the only words that Ginny could make out in between sobs. It broke her heart that he felt responsible for what had happened to her, and at the same time made her love him all the more.

"No Ron! Don't you dare put this on you. You were just a twelve year old boy when it happened. You had three older brothers that didn't see it happening either. It was beyond your control."

"I-I...should have...stayed with you...at the Ministry."

"Then he would have surrendered Hermione to save his worthless arse. They would have killed her, but not before they violated her in every way imaginable. You would never be able to live with yourself if that happened."

"Y-you're my...sister...my job..."

"Remember what Bill always says. What we endure makes us stronger. Learn from the bad and make it a good. I'm the person I am because of what has happened. I like who I am. Yeah it sucked getting here, but I'm here. You're not responsible for what happened. If you need to atone for something, then you stand with me...you fight with me." Ginny told him ferociously.

In the other room they sat in silence. They all felt about twenty years older. It was Hermione that broke the silence.

"You stayed with her through it all. And you saved her life. I can never thank you enough for that. She's like a sister to me." Hermione croaked out. She was barely keeping her emotions in

check. Harry gave her a weak smile. The door quietly opened and Ginny helped her brother into the nearest chair. He held onto her hand like it was a lifeline. Ginny pulled a chair so she could sit with him. Ron looked up with a cold rage burning in his eyes. His eyes met Harry's and he understood immediately. It said only one thing. They're all going to die. Harry sent a silent that's a given back to him. An unspoken pack was made between them.

"So, what are we going to do about this?" Seamus asked. Then all eyes looked to Harry.

"The time of the DA is over. It is time for the Marauders to return to Hogwarts. We're not just going to seek justice and win this war. No, we're going to change the Wizarding World so this shit never happens again. Now can I get a hell yeah?"

"HELL YEAH!"

A/N: I'm so sorry for the late update. I've had a few issues the last two weeks. Long story short, never, never, never ever write when your sleep deprived and over caffeinated. Thank god I gave it a once over before i sent it to my Beta Reader. I had to do a major rewrite yesterday. Also, thanks for all the love in the reviews. It means a lot. Enjoy!

Harry had gotten up before sunrise to go for his morning run. This was surprising considering how late he was up last night. Showing an immense amount of trust, his new Marauders all agreed to let him put a Guardian in their heads, at least until they had mastered Occlumency. The task was very draining on his magic, so he opted for meditation instead of actually sleeping. He was able to recharge his magic better that way and it worked superior to sleep on his mind and body. This practice was what coincidentally had led him to achieving his hybrid form. He had a strong feeling he would need every edge for the coming days ahead.

It had been a long time since he had given Shadow a good run and running always helped him think. Plus, he wanted to familiarize himself with the Forbidden Forest. It was an obvious place for Tommyboy to house and hide his dark creatures. They needed to know what they would be up against in future battles. Plus there was nothing wrong with thinning the herd a little bit. He doubted that Butthead would send any of his boot lickers to aid them. At the very best they just might reevaluate their loyalties. He also needed to find if there were any possible friendlies in there as well.

He was thoroughly enjoying his run. The forest was full of shadows and would make the perfect place to train in his hybrid form, especially away from the watchful eye of the old man. Though they would train to some agree by the lake every morning. It was nothing compared to what would be taught in a more secure location. Hermione had suggested the Room of Requirement. Lavender was quick to point out that it was too well known by Neville and Dumbledore, so it would be the first thing they'd expect.

She was a lot cleverer than her friends gave her credit for. If Dean would pull his head out of his arse for five seconds, he might see that she was so much more than a nice pair of tits. She just needed to be more assertive in other aspects of her life and Hermione a little less all knowing. Both girls had self-esteem issues they needed to work on. They were both so much more than they saw themselves as, and the training would help them with their confidence and how they saw themselves.

Parvati on the other hand knew who she was. She was the Gryffindor resident gossip girl and damn good at it. She had that eternal filter that let her cipher through all the dung that was thrown out there and find the sliver of truth in every rumor. His mum once

told him that intelligence was believing only half of what you hear, read, or see. Brilliance was knowing which half to believe. In that aspect, Parvati illuminated her brilliancy like the dawning of a new day.

She had told him that a lot of loose information was thrown around in the girl's bathrooms. After what he conveniently had thrown out there in the Great Hall last night, it would be an endless fountain of Intel. He encouraged her to get people talking. Tonks could talk to them in private later and collect all the memories she needed. The more people that come forward the better chance they had to expose Old Man and Chosen Git for what they were.

Ron, Dean, and Seamus would work on recruiting the members of the DA that were not loyal to Longbottom. Apparently the list was very long; it was just another example of why they had to be brought down. Ron was a good strategist, but seemed to have a hard time keeping his head under pressure. That would explain why he usually followed Hermione's lead. He would work on that with him.

Dean was, in short, a horndog. He was tall, good looking, and had let it go to his head. Whenever he encountered difficulties in his relationships, he would just ditch the girl and move on to another. It was a practice that flowed over into other aspects of his life. If Dean thought Harry didn't know he was lusting after his mum, he was about to be in for a rude awakening. He did have an idea on how to work that to his advantage, and possible straighten the boy out.

Seamus just had a confidence problem because of his height and strong accent. Harry already knew how to help Seamus to make them both an advantage. He had an aptitude for blowing things up. It just needed focus. Once he got control of that, he suspected that things were going to get very exciting.

As he broke free of the forest, he saw a lone figure down by the Black Lake meditating. His first thought was that it was his mum, but he realized his mistake when the morning sun illuminated blond hair that was tied in a loose ponytail. Then her body shrunk in size and shape until it took on the form of a golden lynx. Almost immediately she sensed Harry's presence. Her ears pointed up and she looked in his direction. A second later she crouched down and disappeared into the grass.

When he made it to the blanket she was meditating on, she was nowhere to be seen. He slowly scanned the area with all his senses. He remembered that Ginny had shut off his panther sense of smell and he had forgotten to reactivate it. Before he could dwell on it, his body reverted back to his human form, and not by his doing.

All the training that Harry had received kicked into gear and he spun around with his wand drawn. Only he found nothing but open grass. Which meant that she must have transformed, casted the spell to revert him silently and transformed back, and all out of his line of sight. Damn she's good.

He heard grass rustling to his left and quickly pointed his wand in that direction. In mid arc a yellow flash shot out of the grass. The lynx slashed the back of his hand across the unprotected tendons, and she bit down on his wand. She used her momentum to relieve him of his wand. Harry repressed the urge to yell out. She disappeared into the grass with her prize before the blood leaked out of his hand. His fingers now dangled lifelessly due to his severed tendons. He cursed himself for falling into her trap so easily. Again he heard rustling noise coming from several different directions at the same time in the grass around him. As hard as he could, he couldn't seem to get a beam on her location.

Again a yellow flash launched into the air, and for a very long second he saw a feral lynx in mid pounce. She crashed down on his chest and forced him on his back. She transformed back and pinned his arms with her knees. Harry grimly felt the tip of his own wand under his chin.

"Gotcha!" A very pleased Daphne Greengrass taunted. Harry just smiled back at her. She leaned back with a confused look. That wasn't the reaction she had been expecting. That was until Harry bucked up and wrapped a leg around her head and pulled her down hard. She saw stars the moment her head slammed on the hard ground. When her eyes were able to focus again, she saw Harry's grinning face. He had used his momentum and weight, and had pinned in a very compromising position. He also had regained control of his wand which was ironically now under her chin.

"And gloating gets you raped and killed...and not always in that order."

"Touché," Daphne agreed with an abrasive glare. Harry got off of her and helped her to her feet. Daphne pulled her wand out and healed Harry's hand. "Sorry about that."

"Don't be. I should have known better," Harry said as he worked his digits. She did good work.

"You got cocky."

"And got spanked for it so thank you."

"Well a woman's work is never truly done."

"I'm not at all surprised that your Animagus form is a Lynx."

"Why?"

"They're known as the Keeper of Secrets, as well as a guardian and guide."

"I'll have to thank Emma for the high praise. Strength, self empowerment, to move in darkness without fear, death and lastly rebirth, your Animagus suits you as well."

"And how did you come to that conclusion?"

"Strength, because you are strong in both mind and body Harry. I do have eyes you know. Self empowerment, I'm assuming you didn't get that way from taking a potion...you're driven. Fearless in the dark, well let's see, you just came out of the Forbidden Forest, and the sun just has risen. As for death and rebirth," Daphne stopped to take a long breath. "Are you sure you want me to continue?"

"More need than want."

"I understand. Harry when your father died, so did you, your mum, and Lord Black. What has risen from that tragedy, has given this Slytherin Ice Queen hope. That is something that I thought I would never have."

For the first time, in a very long time Harry was utterly speechless. He just looked at Daphne in awe. He barely knew her and she saw past his cocky smartass persona and into his very soul. It was very

unnerving and on another level very liberating. He loved the way this girl's mind worked. If he wasn't sure before, he was positive now. He just found his next Marauder.

"Soo...how long have you been an Animagus?" Harry couldn't believe how awkward his voice sounded.

"Hello subject change, it's lovely to meet you." Harry laughed at that, to which Daphne just shrugged. "My mum brewed me the potion after my first year. She said it could be the difference between life and death. She was more right than I ever want her to know. It took me another two years to master it."

"You must come out here every morning to hunt, because you really good at it."

"Yeah, today was the first time I bagged a panther." Daphne teased.

"Actually, you got me, not my panther." Harry shot back with fake indignity.

"Yet...anyway, it keeps my mind sharp, which is key to survival at Hogwarts."

"Funny you should mention that. I want to thank you for what you did for Emma. I know you put yourself at risk doing so."

"I'm still not sure why I did that."

"Regardless, I owe you a debt and I wanted to make you an offer."

Ginny was the last to get down to the lake. Thanks to Lily's potion and other suggested coping techniques, she found she was more centered and in control of herself. This was a relief, because it took all her self control not to sneak back into Harry's trunk last night.

Lily, Sirius, and Harry were standing shoulder to shoulder in front of a larger group of students than she thought would be there. A few first years from Hufflepuff and Gryffindor, as well as the new Marauders, but what surprised her was the two Slytherins. Tracy something and the Ice Queen herself, who was surprisingly talking to Emma. A Slytherin pureblood being friendly to a Gryffindor muggle-born...who knew?

"Sorry I'm late."

"It's quite alright dear. Join the others and then we can begin. Alright, let me be the first to thank you for getting up so early. Now what we do down here every morning, will help you focus your mind, body, and magic." Lily started.

"We are in a war and you need every advantage you can get. Now some of what we will ask of you may seem strange, but trust me when I say it will make sense in the end. Lily will be teaching you the muggle martial art form known as Tai Chi. Try to think of it as moving meditation. She will get into more detail on the benefits of that later. Harry will cover Combat Magic, and I'll focus on sword play." Sirius told them.

"Mostly, because mum doesn't believe in cutting anyone's head off," Harry added.

"Sirius," Lily mumbled. Professor Black without blinking an eye, or showing any reaction at all, smacked Harry in the back of the head.

"Ow!"

"They're so cute when they think you can't get them," Lily added, which made everyone laugh. "Now we're going to do some exercises to see where you are physically, and where you need improvement. Afterwards Sirius and my cheeky son will give you a little demonstration."

It was during one of the stretching exercises that Daphne noticed a distorted rune on the back of Emma's neck. The day before when they had her hanging upside-down it looked differently. She had just thought it was an odd looking birthmark. Now Daphne knew better, and she was sure she had seen that mark somewhere before.

Ginny and Harry were on their way to the Great Hall for breakfast when she saw a fox in the hall. As soon as she stepped towards the little creature, it ran into an open classroom.

"Don't worry Ginny. You go ahead, I'll get it." Harry told her. She was about to tell him that she knew it was Tonks, when she saw him

point to a portrait on the wall. It acted like it wasn't paying attention, even though it was obvious that it was.

"Sure thing Luv, I'll save you a seat." Ginny said as she continued on to the Great Hall.

"By the way, why were you late this morning?" Harry asked as he grabbed the door knob. Ginny stopped cold in her tracks. She bit her bottom lip as she tried to think of something to tell him.

"You should know better than to question a witch's morning beauty regiment Git," Ginny answered off handedly, as if it was nothing. She started back down the hall.

"Now that you mention it Tease, you did have a certain glow about you when you came down. Hermione said you told her you had to scratch an itch or something." Thankfully Ginny didn't turn around to answer him, for if she had Harry would have seen her face do it's impression of a tomato.

"Well it was in a hard to reach spot," Ginny said in an attempt to make it seem like nothing at all, and praying that Harry would just drop it. No such luck.

"Next time just come get me, I'll scratch it for you. It's just one of those free services I provide," Harry joked.

"That's sweet Harry, but I really have to go," She told him bugged eyed as she picked up her pace. He just shrugged off her odd behavior as he continued on with the task at hand.

Harry closed the door to the classroom and cast the charms to insure their conversation would be private. When he turned around to talk to Tonks he got the shock of his life. She had taken the form of Professor McGonagall laying seductively across the teacher's desk in lingerie no less and curling her finger in a come-hither fashion.

"Get over here big boy and make an old witch smile," Tonks taunted him. Just how she was able to keep a straight face she would never know.

"Okay that is wrong on so many levels."

"Your face was totally worth it." Tonks laughed at him as she changed back to her normal self, and jumped back into her cloths.

"You know the next time I see her that image is going to pop into my head."

"Good, that was for getting me pulled off field duty you prat." Tonks snarled as she marched up to him. He was going to deny it, but didn't think he could pull it off. Tonks cupped Harry's face in her hands and gave him a soft placid kiss.

"That was for the relief on my husband's face when I told him my new assignment." Tonks then took his hand and put it on her tummy. "I have to remember it's not just about me and my ego anymore. You would make a really good Godfather."

"You going soft on me Nymphy?" Harry asked as he wiped a tear out of the corner of her eye. She slapped him in the arm for his cheek. It's kisses or claws with her today. Harry guessed it was the whole pregnancy hormone thing, but knew better than to voice that opinion with his current company. He liked his bits the way they were.

"Prat! So besides the whole bringing Dumbledore and Longbottom down, is there anything else you need me to do? If you want me to part the Red Sea too, all you have to do is ask."

"Ha...ha," Harry laughed sarcastically at her.

"Your letter said something about a girl named Emma."

"Let me ask you something. Like you did with McGonagall just now, is it possible for you to mimic someone's blood?" Tonks was taken aback by his question. She never once even thought to try it.

"In theory, I suppose so. I don't have that kind of control and quite frankly I've never heard of anyone ever doing it before. Why do you ask?"

"Well, Emma got attacked yesterday. Don't worry, I'll be dealing the Twisted Trio very shortly. During the course of the attack, her wand was broken. Another student fixed it, but it barely works. From what Emma told me, it didn't work all that well before."

"Yeah, ever since Ollivander disappeared last year, most people are working with hand-me-down-wands."

"You know, it's a rite of passage in America for Wizards to make their own wands. You find all the items needed and customize it to your own needs. You baptize the Magical core with your own blood and magic so that it only works for you or a blood relative. Why in the hell did they stop that practice here?"

"Bureaucrats in the Ministry trying to control everything we do."

"Damn this country needs a Revolution!"

"Preferably one without a lot of bloodshed if you don't mind. That's the kind of legacy I wish to leave to my child."

"Got it," Harry agreed. "Getting back to Emma, I asked her to pull a wand out of my Trench Coat. I told her to ask in her mind for the wand that would best work for her."

"And?"

"From this point on, my mum is out of the loop." If he was wrong, he wasn't going to put his mum through that. They had put that part of their lives behind them and he saw no need for her to revisit it. If those people needed to be dealt with, he was the one to do it. His mum had enough heartache in her lifetime. He wasn't about to add some more to it.

"She didn't?" Tonks knew there was only one wand that would make him act this way. She also knew he blamed himself for his mum's falling out with those muggles.

"Just before she pulled it out, she was mimicking me. She even had my hair texture."

"After, her eyes stayed green and her hair went dark red." Tonks finished for him.

"Not just that, when she gave the wand a wave she broke a bind on her magic. Rough estimate, I'd say she doubled her magic."

"Now I know the ministry has been known to put low level binds on children's magic if their muggle-born to prevent accidental magic in public. They were designed to break the first time they use their wands. What the hell was her parents thinking?"

"They ditched her at an orphanage once her hair started to change colors."

"WHAT! Metamorphmagi are never left with muggles! It's a bloody Law. They're too much of a danger to the International Statute of Wizarding Secrecy. The parents are Obliviased and the children are put in a home of a witch or wizard that is in the Metamorphmagus Sanctuary Registry. My mum's in the registry herself. There is no way in hell this was an accident. Someone was hiding her." Tonks was pacing back and forth as she went on her rant. She had to practice what Lily taught her to calm herself. The Law was an old one. At the time it was believed that no muggle could have given birth to a Metamorphmagus. The child had to have been stolen from some heartbroken Wizarding family. The views of the Ministry hadn't changed much since then. The child would be put with a family that could teach the child to harness their gift.

"I need you to evaluate her and see where her control level is at. I need to know if she can mimic my blood. I'll get someone less personally offended to investigate how and why she ended up in that orphanage." Though, Harry would like nothing better than investigate this himself. He knew himself well enough to know he would go about it like a rampaging bull in a china shop. He couldn't handle this the way he handled the Malcolm Douglas thing. Whoever was behind this, knew how to hide their tracks. They would know he was on to them long before he ever got close to figuring out who the guilty parties were. It was too personal for him to be objective.

There was a third scenario running through Tonks' head, but she needed to get a feel for the girl first. It wasn't uncommon for a Metamorphmagus child to bond with a host family that they were placed with, and take on the host family's physical characteristics. Emma was untrained and had a bind put on her. That she was able to still use her ability despite the bind on her magic was amazing. She shouldn't have been able to do that, then again no one was around to tell her she couldn't. Just like no one told Harry he couldn't

have a hybrid form. One thing was for sure. This was going to be a very interesting year at Hogwarts.

"I would say my mum, but I'm sure she wouldn't keep a level head about it."

"Plus, I need someone that will bend the rules or flat out crush them under her heels."

"That only leaves Aunt Cissy."

"I forgot to ask how the Order Meeting went last night."

"Well your name came up a few times. You must have pissed Dumbledore off something fierce. I heard that you let a few secrets slip in the Great Hall."

"Just enough to get people thinking. Of course making Longbottom piss his pants was definitely the icing on the cake."

"Well, he played the victim to Molly. I swear you could see the steam coming off her head. He told her that he couldn't guarantee she would be more than a concubine. Molly has it in her mind that Ginny will be the next Lady Longbottom. That however wasn't the only reason she was on the verge of a fit. It would appear the twins have come into some gold recently and moved out. Molly was not happy and when she stopped by their new flat...let's just say they were breaking it in proper. I don't think she approved of Fred's guest. They were also late to the meeting and he was sporting a few wicked looking love bites. They only stayed long enough to tell Dumbledore to bugger off and payoff both of theirs, as well as Ron, and Ginny's scholarships. I'm guessing that she thinks they're mixed up in something illegal.

Dumbledore was desperate for any Intel on what happened at Diagon Alley. As far as he knows the Minister is black balling him. The man has some serious control issues. He doesn't know about the Marauders yet, but that will change when the Daily Prophet comes out today. Thanks to a couple of house elves, Lily and Sirius have deniability, but it's only a matter of time before he figures it out. The Marauder Mark kind of gives it away. Someone from the Daily Prophet managed to get a picture of it."

"Is that what their calling it. Dad would be proud. Any new Intel on the Tommyboy front?"

"Oh, I like that one. Snape made a late appearance. He didn't tell us anything we wouldn't have figured out for ourselves. The Git had one hell of a fit. Malfoy and Greyback were tortured for the failure at Diagon Alley. They did manage to get back a good portion of their gold, other than that nothing concrete."

When Harry entered the Great Hall he noticed that Neville had managed to gain a new fan girl by the name of Romilda Vane. The little social climber was attached to his arm, and by the look of it she wasn't letting go anytime soon. They were sitting close to the Marauders, but as of yet none of them acted like they noticed them. He was impressed by Ron's self control. He presumed that Hermione must have slipped him a calming draught.

It was an obvious play to make Ginny jealous. Pathetic Nevy, very pathetic, that poor misguided girl is going to snap her neck if she laughs at another one of your lame ass jokes. When she saw him, Ginny gave him a wink and slid over to make room for him. Harry couldn't help but smile like an idiot at her. When he sat down he leaned in to whisper something to her and noticed that she smelled slightly different. He chalked it up to a new perfume she was probably trying.

"I don't suppose you're on the menu Tease?" He purred in her ear. It made the hair on the back of her neck stand on end. She repressed the urge to shiver. She wasn't about to let him know the affect he had on her. Besides, two could play that game. She let her warm breath cascade across his neck just before she whispered back.

"Maybe...maybe not Git." Now it was Harry's turn to stifle a shudder. In the back of her mind a little insecure voice had told her that he wouldn't be attracted to her now that she was on the potion. She now silenced the last part of her old self. She knew what she wanted and she wasn't going to let anything or one tell her differently.

"I wish he would take the hint and bugger off already." Parvati said loud enough for Neville and Romilda to hear. Neville curled his lips up as his new girlfriend let out a disgruntled humph. Harry guessed that he was waiting for something to happen. Right on cue the morning post arrived.

Hermione was curious to read about the attack on Diagon Alley, but froze when she saw an all too familiar red post heading their way. Ron tensed as he wondered if his activities on the train had gotten back to his mother. Ginny saw Neville's broad smirk and knew instantly who was getting an infamous Molly Weasley public tongue-lashing. She was shocked beyond all reason when it landed in front of Harry.

"Oh look, it seems I've been naughty." Harry chuckled out as he reached for it.

"No! I'll just get rid of it," Ginny said as she snatched it up just before Harry could reach it. It was one thing to humiliate her in public, but to have a go at Harry. That was something she would not allow.

"Hand it over Ginny. I've been chewed out before. I for one would like to hear the propaganda that Nevy been spewing in her ear," Harry said in a casual manner as he held out his hand. Reluctantly Ginny handed it over to him. She couldn't believe that her mum would do this to someone she had never met.

"Well this should be fun," Harry joked as he broke the seal. Immediately, the Howler came to life and the sound of Molly Weasley's shrieking voice filled the Great Hall.

"Just who do you think you are Harry Potter! Dragging my daughter off to Diagon Alley when she should be at school! She could have been killed! If her brothers weren't there she just might have been, no thanks to you! And you call yourself a supposed Noble Lord! I've heard all about your depraved attitude towards women! Lying with Succubi no less! Well you can stick with those scarlet things and leave my daughter alone! She is a good girl and obviously under some spell or potion to be associating with someone of your shady moral core! She will not be another notch on your wand, I can tell you that! You even encouraged one of my sons to have sex with a Goblin! I will have none of that do you hear me! I forbid you to even so much as speak to any of my children!" Then the Howler turned to Ginny.

"As for you young lady, how could you treat Neville that way? He has been very good to you and our family! You're jeopardizing you

future for some alluring pretty boy! I thought I raised you better than that!" Then it turned to Ron.

"And don't you think I haven't heard about what you did on the train young man! Hermione is a virtuous girl and you have disheveled her good reputation with your total lack of self-control! I am totally disgusted with you!" And once more it turned to Harry, who was looking at the staff table and noticed that his mum was gone. He almost felt sorry for Ginny's mum...almost. He didn't care what she had said about him, but the derogatory way she referred to Sasha and her people pissed him off. Not to mention the way she yelled at and what she implied about Ginny. His mum's absence meant only one thing. Molly was about to learn that you never mess with a lioness' cub. As good as her Howler was, it was nothing compared to his mums razor sharp tongue.

"You stay away from my children!" The Howler suddenly burst into flames. Ginny and Hermione faces were in their hands and Ron had a look of horror in his face. Neville was laughing out right, as were some of the people from the tables nearby. Ron, Hermione, and Ginny were all shocked when Harry started clapping.

"Now that was a damn good Howler! Okay, she's obviously misguided, that's a given. The woman has been listening to the wrong people for too long, but you can't deny that she loves her children. Plus, she called me an alluring pretty boy. So tell me Tease, am I alluring?" Harry dragged out the last word in a husky voice that made most of the people listening laugh. Ginny was very grateful that he was not mad and even was making a joke about the whole thing. She hugged him and whispered her thanks in his ear.

"Do you think Fred really did sleep with Hesta?"

"Well good for him way to go broadening that horizon. Now, do you want some payback?" Harry whispered to her.

"Is that a trick question?" Ginny asked with a grin.

"Then watch the master," Harry answered. Out of the corner of his eye he could see that Dean, who was sitting across from Neville, was taking a drink of Pumpkin juice. "So Dean, I hear you want to shag my mum?"

Dean forcibly shot the contents of his mouth all over Neville and Romilda. The girl shrieked out, as the Chosen Git howled about the injustice of what just happened to him. Dean looked as if he was going to wet himself. He really didn't want to get on Harry's bad side. The rest of the table was laughing at what just happened.

"It's all about the timing Darlin." Harry laughed at Ginny.

"You are the master," Ginny agreed as she pulled him in so she could reward him with a well deserved kiss.

A/N: First I'd like to give kudos to GhostChicken for referring to Malfoy, Crabbe, and Goyle as the Twisted Trio in one of her reviews. I've been dying to use it ever since. I hope you liked this chapter and would like to hear what you think.

Lily could still hear the shrieking of the howler as she exited the Castle. She was fuming as the Muggles would say. She had always considered herself a relatively calm woman. She had her fits of anger, just like any normal person would. Perhaps sometimes they would be louder and more volatile than they needed to be. She was a redhead after all, and subtlety was a wasted art on the ones that were usually responsible for her outbursts. It was healthy to release the firestorm that dwelled within.

As a child her mum had signed her up to take Tai Chi to help her control her inner demon, as she so affectionately called it. Thanks to those teachings, even when she was at her most volatile, she always had a certain level of control. That control had been put to the test by her husband more times than she ever cared to remember. Even when Sirius and Harry had her at her wits end, she never lost control.

In less than a minute Molly Weasley had her seeing red and this time it wasn't her hair. The woman had crossed a line and now, by Merlin, she was going to learn why Lily's Animagus was a lioness.

"VONDA!" Lily yelled as she marched to the gate that led to Hogsmeade. With a pop, her house elf appeared at her side and had to run to keep up with her Mistress's fast pace.

"Yes Mistress?"

"Find Molly Weasley and return with her location!" Lily snapped not even bothering to look down at her. That alone told Vonda that whatever that Witch had done it was very bad. Never had her Mistress ever raised her voice to her. This was going to be bad...very, very bad.

"Yes Mistress!" Vonda answered and popped away. No sooner had Lily exited Hogwarts grounds when Vonda returned.

"Mistress, the Witch you seek is in the Village down the way."

"Perfect," Lily snarled as she quickened her pace.

"Mistress why are you so enraged?" Vonda asked in hopes that talking would calm her Mistress down. What came out of Lily's mouth was an unending, barely coherent, very unfriendly rant.

Vonda was only able to make a few of the words - bitch, foot, and arse. Vonda assumed she must be channeling Master Harry. He was always fond of those words when he was incensed.

Molly Weasley was a woman on a mission, or would mother be the better word? Yes, mother was the ticket. Her family was all out of whack and it was high time that she straightened them out. She had seen this coming for awhile now. As always at the core of it was Ginny. What was it with that girl? She attracted trouble like a garden attracts gnomes.

She loved her daughter very much, but she could be dreadfully exasperating at times. Stubborn to the core, opinionated beyond reason, with mischievousness that leveled on brilliance, defiant to the point that you wanted to strangle her, and completely ungrateful for what her mother had done to secure her a better future. She honestly didn't know where she got it from.

She was such a good little girl until her first year at Hogwarts. She had the cutest crush on Neville. He was quite taken with her, and her future looked very bright indeed. It all started when Ginny let herself be controlled by that damn diary. She had hurt so many students, and if it wasn't for Neville she would have died in that cursed chamber.

If it wasn't for Dumbledore's and Neville's influence she could have been sent to Azkaban straight away. Ginny was very lucky all she walked away with was a Life Debt. The daft girl saw it as a curse instead of a blessing. How could she not see the opportunity before her? The-Boy-Who-Lived's fame, fortune, and everything that came with that. Yes, Neville had a few character flaws thanks to his Grandmother, but the woman wasn't going to live forever. All Ginny needed to do was to tolerate her while she was still alive. A proper Witch could mold Neville into the kind of Wizard that she would be proud of. Did the girl not realize how many years she had to put into Arthur? He certainly didn't start off as the steadfast father and husband he was today.

Molly could still remember all the parties that she went to before the Prewetts lost their fortune because of her father's gambling. They were once a respected family and linked to some of the most influential members of the Wizengamot. Now their good name was all but a joke. Her aunt Muriel all but disowned them. She was little

more than a child herself and she was obligated to care for her younger brothers as her beautiful mum was forced to pay off the debts her family had. Her mum was never really the same after that. It wasn't until she returned to school that she learned how her mum had accomplished that. It was made very clear that very few Lords were all that Noble.

She knew what her future held, so she sought to find herself a husband. Many said that they would consider it if she was accommodating, and against her better judgment she was. She felt she had little choice, as she had two little brothers to protect. She made the mistake of seeking out wealthy young classmates. Her accommodations were small at first, but their desires only grew as did her transgressions. She soon lost control of the situation. Before she knew it she was the joke of the school.

It was Arthur that took a beating from four Slytheins, in defense of her jaded honor that brought Molly back to her senses. Just a poor boy from a poor family, but he had a more noble heart than any of the ones that she had unwisely chosen. True, his obsession with Muggle things could be annoying at times, but he was good and decent. When he looked at her she felt beautiful, not plain and big boned as she was often called, but mostly she didn't feel dirty.

Before she knew it they were married. She never regretted that decision, but at times she missed her old life, back when she was still young and innocent. The parties, oh how she missed the parties and spinning around in her dress. It made her feel free. She wanted that for Ginny, and with luck she could have it.

Now she was going to throw it all away over some handsome boy with a Title, which was a sick joke in her opinion. She still remembered all the stories that Rita Skeeter wrote about his mother. How the Muggle-born Witch snaked one of the most handsome Noble Lords away from more deserving Pure-blooded Witches. It was said that she was very gifted with potions. Rita exposed how she had used Love Potions to have him literally panting like a dog for her. Yet, she shunned him until their last year at Hogwarts. Then she swooped in for the kill. The ink was barely dry on the Marriage Certificate before she was conveniently pregnant. All the time Sirius Black was always close at hand. It was obvious that she took advantage of the fact that he was distraught, over his longtime girlfriend having a Marriage Contract with another man. There were

even pictures of her so called attempt at comforting him. Poor trusting James was blind to it all. He deserved better. Once her son was born they were never seen. It was rumored that he looked strikingly like Sirius Black. Then noble brave James Potter got killed by He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. That scandalous woman didn't even have the decency to attend her husband's funeral. Remus was beside himself with grief.

Now they were back with their so called love child. She didn't care what the Daily Prophet said or that he looked like James in that picture. He was under a Glamour Charm, she was sure of it. And the ways the two of them were throwing curses around Diagon Alley. Some innocent child could have been gravely hurt. The boy had a smile on his face for Merlin's sake! Neville said that woman was practically bragging how her son had been with Succubi in the Great Hall. It seems that he is just like that sinful mother of his.

She gave Albus a good piece of her mind for letting that twisted family teach their children. Of course Remus instantly jumped to their defense. He was such a loyal friend. Tonks was doing her best to keep him calm. Molly just hoped that she would be able to make him see the truth about those vial people.

Now that boy was trying to infect her children with his perverse ways. Well she would have none of it. She had listened to Arthur when he said that they should trust in their children to find their own way. Now she was going to do it her way. By now that sorry excuse for a Noble Lord would be feeling the sting of her Howler. With her daughter's attitude properly adjusted, she was going to put her two troublesome twins back in line.

George woke up to the delicious feel of Angelina's naked body against his. Her raven hair was sprawling across his bare chest, as she silently played connect the dots with freckles. Her beautiful face had intense concentration on it as she drew an invisible picture that only she could see. It was the same expression that she had when she played Quidditch. It was completely adorable. Her lips curled up when she felt a part of him stir. Her eyes slowly looked up until her firewhisky colored eyes locked with his hazel ones. They had that mischievous shimmer that he loved so much.

"Is someone finally up?" She purred at him.

"Not yet Luv, but it's coming."

"Why Mr. Weasley, that was a rather bold statement...I hope you can back it up." She added with an eye brow wiggle. George answered her by using the move he saw Hestia use on Fred the day before. Angelina squeaked as she sucked in a quick breath. She was both shocked and aroused by George's dynamic move. Fear mixed in as he grabbed her wrists and guided them until they crossed each other over her head. One of his hands held them in place as the other slowly made its way down her neck. Her breathing became heavier as she stared silently into his lust filled eyes. The loose way he held her wrists together, told her that he would stop if she asked. The thing was that though his new dominating side it was quite intimidating, it was also very erotic.

"Prepare yourself to be ravaged Ms. Johnson." George told her in a husky voice. With reckless abandonment she wrapped her legs around his waist and pulled him in. His mouth crashed down on hers and found that her hunger matched his own.

Blam! Blam! Blam!

"Did you hear something?" George asked as he broke for air and looked around the room.

"Hey! Less talking, more ravishing," Angelina ordered and George attacked her neck with his mouth. He quickly found her sensitive spot and she moaned out her appreciation. "I don't want to know how you learned to do that, but don't you dare stop."

Blam! Blam! Blam!

Angelina rolled her eyes in aggravation. She couldn't believe that those two were at it again. The least they could have done was put up a Silencing Charm or something. George let go of her wrists and put both of his hands to good use. She left her arms crossed so not to break from her secret fantasy. The annoying banging faded away as her lover brought her closer and closer to bliss. She would let him take her anyway he wanted and they would deal with the ramifications of it later. This was what she wanted. She knew herself well enough to know that.

Blam! Blam! Blam!

"Bloody Fuck That's annoying!" They both yelled out at the same time. George jumped out of the bed and started to frantically look for his wand. Angelina rolled over on her side to enjoy the show.

Blam! Blam! Blam!

"Got it!" George yelled out as he waved the wand above his head and did a victory dance. She rolled her eyes at his ridiculous boogie, but couldn't stop herself from giggling all the same. It was just one of the things that she loved about him.

"Cast the damn charm already and get your arse back in bed! I have yet to be thoroughly ravaged, Mr. Weasley." She commanded as she struck a very sexy pose on the bed. She wiggled her bum in a way that drove him totally nuts.

"On it Luv," George said after receiving the proper motivation from his voluptuous temptress. He cast the silencing charm at his twins room and moved to go back into his bed and give Angelina the attention that she just demanded. She assumed the position that she had earlier. Just short of the bed a playfully evil idea popped into his devious mind. She recognized the look in his eyes immediately and gulped hard.

With a swish of his wand, red ribbons shot forth binding her wrists to the headboard. She squeaked in a quick breath as the end of the ribbon covered her eyes. She didn't fight against it, but bit down on her bottom lip in anticipation.

Blam! Blam! Blam! "Fred and George Weasley you open this door right this instant! I know you're both in there!" George froze where he stood and all the color left his body when the bellowing voice of Howlin` Molly Weasley came through the open window. Not that Angelina could see with her being naked, tied, blindfolded, and very, very aggravated.

"Honestly! Does that woman not have a life of her own?"

"I'll get rid of her." George walked over to the window and looked down. This was not good. She was in her standard Fred-and-George-I'm-going-to-hang-you-by-your-thumbs stance. Both of her hands were on her hips and the tapping of one of her feet was

becoming faster and louder. After what happened at the Order meeting he shouldn't have been surprised that she would come demanding answers. He just wasn't expecting her this bloody early.

Angelina had just recently returned to the country and his mum was intruding on their limited time together. She had gotten on as a Chaser on a French Quidditch Team and was only visiting for a few days. He wished it was more, but he would take what he could get. He felt a flare of anger. His mum's meddling was really pissing him off.

"Mum! Now is not a good time. Come back in an hour." He heard Angelina clear her throat. "Make that two hours."

"Don't you dare shut that window George Weasley! I will not be dismissed! Do you hear me young man! I said don't shut that window!"

Whatever muffled commands that his mum was yelling at him he ignored as he took in the lovely view on his bed. "Now, where were we?"

"You mentioned something about ravaging."

"Yes, but first let's find those ticklish spots." George said with the glee of a kid in a candy store.

"George don't you dare!" Angelina screamed as she withered around in the bed, even before he had reached it.

"Oh, but I am daring." George teased as he crept over to the bed.

"MOLLY WEASLEY!" Was heard coming from outside and quickly followed by his mum's scream and the side of the house shaking from being hit by a spell.

"What the hell now," George said as he went back to the window and threw it open. On the street below he saw his mum getting up off the ground. She must have dived to avoid being hit by a hex. In the middle of the street was a woman with dark red hair and green eyes. She was looking at his mum like she could spit nails.

"Are you out of your mind?" Molly shrieked as she got to her feet.

"Just who do you think you are sending a Howler to my son?" Lily yelled.

"If you had done a proper job raising him I wouldn't have to!" Molly countered and then was forced to dive to avoid being hit by another hex.

"Said the woman that all but called her own daughter a whore for the whole school to hear."

"She didn't?" Angelina, wrapped in a sheet, asked as she looked out the window at the scene playing out in the street. George gave her a double take. She had somehow managed to free herself from the binds.

"How did you get out of that?" George asked.

"I'm adventurous and like to experiment...that doesn't make me stupid." She told him as she wiggled her wand.

"And exactly where were you hiding that?"

"If she told you that, it wouldn't be a very good hiding spot." Hestia said as she strolled across the room naked and looked out the window. Fred followed her into the room, but thankfully he had the good sense to put on a pair of boxers. Hestia eyed George with a smirk before taking a position next to Angelina at the window. "I guess they really are identical," She said, to which Angelina laughed. George looked down and turned red, before bolting to his dresser and acquiring some cloths.

"Two questions oh brother of mine."

"Shot"

"She's not going to put cloths on is she?"

"She's going on ten hours now, so probably not... next?"

"What the hell did she do to your back?" George asked as he examined the labyrinth of scratch marks across his back. "That had to have hurt?"

"Yeah it stung...but what a ride it was," Fred answered with a broad grin.

"Kinky."

"Pot to the cauldron, oh brother of mine...pot...to...the...cauldron." Fred pointed to the ribbons still tied to the bed.

"Will you two shut it! This is getting good."

On the street below Molly was on one of her famous rants while sending hex after hex at Lily. Who was simply stepping out of the way at the last second, while egging her on at the same time.

"I know you're all tops with potions Potter, you being Slughorn's favorite and all. Only Muggle-born in the Slug Club as I recall. Wonder how you managed that one? That's how you got James isn't it? A Love Potion? Now that cad of a son of yours is trying to do it to my sweet Ginny. Will you bloody stand still!" Molly screamed as she fired another curse at Lily only to miss again. Molly had only seen pictures of Lily in the paper until today. She needed a Love Potion to get James as much as her husband needed another Muggle toy. If there was any justice in the Wizarding World she would have not aged well, no such luck. Plus she had the grace of a dancer. Bitch!

"What is your function for the Order anyway...cook, because honey you couldn't hit land if you fell off a ruddy broom. As for my son needing a Love Potion to get a girl...bitch please. You dare call my son a cad with you history. Someone is wearing their hypocrite hat today. What was that nickname the Slytherins had for you. Molly the..."

"You shut your mouth! My sons live in that house." Molly screamed as she upgraded from hexes to curses. Her desperation was starting to show with her aim.

"Seriously? That one wasn't even close. Your kids went to school with the children of the ones that you went to school with. Do you honestly believe that wasn't ever thrown in their faces? You know how cruel children can be. Do you have any idea what it was like for that lovely young girl to be compared to you?" Lily snapped as she hit Molly with a Stinging Jinx.

"Some of us didn't have a tight little body to get us a Noble Lord. We had to work with what we were given. At least I never used sex as a weapon like you did." Dammit missed again!

"What the hell is that suppose to mean?" Lily's Expulso spell made the ground before Molly explode and cover her with dirt. A large clump of grass with a flower sticking out of it landed on top of her head. Molly rolled her venom filled eyes as she threw it off.

"Like Sirius Black would have hung around for all those years if you weren't giving him a good reason." To say that Molly was jealous of Lily was an understatement. She was the kind of beautiful that made men eyes follow her, even if they were with someone else. Oh she acted like she didn't notice, but no one was that blind. Her brothers would come back from Order meetings talking about how brilliant Lily was, or how she was so good at charms. Once they dragged Arthur to one of those meetings and he wouldn't stop talking about her. Lily told me what a rubber duck was for. If we have a girl I hope she's just like Lily. It drove her crazy. What chance did a plain big boned girl have against someone like that?

"What are you babbling about now you twit."

"I raised six boys remember. I know how their brains work. Deny them something and they almost become obsessed about it. You played hard to get until just before James was graduated. Wouldn't want him going out into the world and finding a proper Witch would you? You tricked him into marrying you and then got him killed!" Molly spat out and crossed a line for the second time that day. Lily's features became feral.

She charged Molly, sending a Furnunculuc Curse followed a Diffindo. Molly backed away as she put up a shield. It didn't take long to fall under Lily's barrage of curses. Molly tripped and fell on her back. As she scampered to get to her feet, Lily closed the gap between them. Molly yipped as she was hit with a Stinger Jinx on her bum. Only to be followed by several more hitting other parts of her body, the intensity of the jinx becoming greater with every hit. She became painfully aware that if this was a real battle she would be dead by now. If their places were switched, she knew that she would be sending far worse at her.

"Mummafacashus!" Lily howled at her. Molly's robes wrapped around her body tightly and she fell, face first, into the street. She was then roughly pulled into a kneeling position by her hair. She felt the pain of Lily's wand on her throat. One look in her eyes told her that the woman was barely holding it together. When the woman spoke she could swear that she had fangs.

"Bitch, you don't know me or my life, so you don't get to judge me! You still have your husband to hold you at night and shield you from the darkness, to laugh with, to cry with...t-to make you feel alive.

YOU KNOW WHAT I GOT! I GOT TO SEE A SNAKEFACED BASTARD SHOOT A KILLING CURSE IN MY HUSBANDS BACK! I GOT TO SEE ALL THE LOVE HE HAD FOR ME AND MY SON IN HIS EYES, ONLY TO WITNESS THE LIFE FADE FROM THEM!

TRY EXPLAINING TO A LITTLE BOY THE REASON HE CAN'T STAY IN ANY ONE PLACE LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE ANY REAL FRIENDS, AND THE REASON WHY HIS FATHER ISN'T THERE TO TEACH HIM ALL THE THINGS ONLY A FATHER CAN IS BECAUSE SOME HALF-WITTED NEVER-WAS MADE SOME DAMN PROPHECY!

HOW ABOUT, WATCHING YOUR SON WHO SHOULD BE PLAYING WITH OTHER KIDS, TRAIN UNTIL HE DROPS FROM EXHAUSTION, BECAUSE HE FEELS HE NEEDS TO PROTECT HIS MOTHER AND AVENGE HIS FATHER? DO YOU KNOW THE VERY MOMENT THAT YOUR SON STOPPED BEING A CHILD? I BLOODY DO AND I LIVE WITH THAT EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE!

NOW I KNOW YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE IDIOTS THAT THINK RITA SKEETER IS A REAL JOURNALIST, BUT I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU THE REAL FACTS, NOT DUMBLEDORE AND LONGBOTTOM'S.

Fact! Yes your daughter went with my son to Diagon Alley yesterday. Fact! Dumbledore approved it. Fact! Ginny volunteered to go. Fact! My son sent his house elf to hide her in his vault until it was over. Fact! She refused, because Death Eaters had one of you sons. Fact! They told her to surrender herself or they were going to kill your son. Fact! She lead a rescue with only two of your other sons, a Goblin, and a house elf as backup. Fact! They saved not you're your other son, but the Director of Gringotts himself. Fact! Instead of

running like so many fully trained Witches and Wizards were doing, my son battled his way through Trolls, Gargoyles, and Orcs to get to her. Fact! Greyback had his claws around your daughter's throat, and only when my son arrived did he let Ginny go. Fact! You precious Chosen One pulled his wand on your daughter and called her his property. Fact! My son put himself between her and Longbottom's wand.

Personally, I would need more than Dumbledore's word before I surrender my child over to a spoiled brat! Here's a little bit of advice from one mother to another. Stop talking at your daughter and start talking to her or you are going to lose Ginny for good. Oh, this is one more little fact for you, so listen real carefully. If you ever disrespect Harry or Ginny again I will, Azkaban be damned, not hold back." She shoved Molly's face in the street before turning to leave. It was only then that she realized that a crowd of people had gathered around them. One face that she recognized was that of Gabriella Greengrass. The women shared an unreadable look, before Lily gave her a slight nod. It was returned, and Lily Apparated back to the front gate of Hogwarts.

The woman stepped forward from the crowd and stopped just short of Molly. She pulled out a copy of the morning's Daily Prophet. She threw it on the ground in front of her. The front page had picture of the Dark Mark over Gringotts. Then two swords pierced the skull and the snake dropped dead. The headline above read.

The End of an Era

The Beginning of Hope

"While you're down there where you obviously belong, you might want to read the article on yesterday's attack. Lord Potter and your daughter were named as heroes of the battle. In fact they are going to be receiving the Order of Merlin on Saturday, along with several other private citizens that stood and fought for their right to live.

Let me tell you something about Lord Harry James Potter, he rallied us to fight back. I know because I was there, as was my little daughter. He showed us a spell that would work against them, and then charged into the thick of it without fear.

As for those Succubi that you think are so sinful and scandalous, they came to our aid when it looked the darkest. Families are still unbroken today because they showed us more humanity than we ever showed them. I once thought like you, but no more.

If you ever bothered to get to know Lily, then you would have seen that Rita Skeeter's so called exposé for what it was. A ghastly attempt by remaining Death Eaters to draw her out, so they could finish what they started. Are you really that daft woman?" Gabriella finished with disgust. She turned on her heels and walked away. The crowd parted so she could pass, but not before some of them started to clap and cheer. Of all that now stood in the street, none aided Molly.

The hordes of spectators were gone when Fred walked out of her house and over to his mother, and cast the Counter-Curse that Harry had taught him.

"Has the whole world gone mad? Be a dear and help you old mum up will you Fred...Fred?" Molly asked him, but he was already half way to his door. Molly got up and followed her son to the house. Fred stopped at the front door and turned to face his mother. The look on his face was like when he talked of Umbridge. George walked out the front door and stood shoulder to shoulder with his twin with the same expression.

"When you look at Gin-Gin..." Fred started.

"You see an eleven old girl..." George continued.

"That made a mistake."

"You've been trying..."

"To fix her..."

"Ever since."

"She's not broken."

"Never was."

"What we see is a brilliant..."

"Bold..."

"Brave..."

"Powerful Witch".

"Until you see that mum..."

"Were done." Then they stepped into their house and slammed the door in her face. Molly just stood looking at the door with a blank face, as she slowly digested what had just happened. When she finally turned around and walked away from her sons house, she was as pale as a Patronus. Her world was crumbling around her and for once she didn't know how to fix it. She slowly picked up the discarded copy of the Daily Prophet. Perhaps it was time she got some facts, then maybe...just maybe. she could figure out how to fix all this.

A/N: There you go, sorry it was late. Once again, credit goes to GhostChicken for Howlin`Molly Weasley. Darlin` you come up with the best adjectives. Now I want to say that I'm not Molly bashing. She's just very misguided at the moment. I originally was just going to have Lily send her a Howler, but since everyone pretty much demanded it. Her you go. I hope I did it service.

A/N: Sorry, sorry, sorry, I know this one was late. Holidays...relatives...and illnesses, funny how they all go together huh.

CONTENT WARNING: This chapter has a sexual assault and character death. Don't say I didn't warn you.

Narcissa walked into the Ninth Street Orphanage's main office. She was dressed in Muggle attire and under a Glamour Charm. To the people in the office she looked to be about twenty years older than she really was. A few gray hairs were intermixed with the light brown hair she was now sporting.

"Excuse me, may I help you?" A plump woman behind a desk asked her. She looked to be in her mid forties. Narcissa plastered on a fake smile and addressed the woman.

"Well I certainly hope so. My name is Rose Evans. I work for the Hogwarts Academy." Narcissa told her the fake name that the Ministry used when dealing with Muggles. The woman showed recognition of the name, so she continued. "It seems that all our information on one..." She looked down at the empty open folder in her arms, before looking back at the woman. "Emma Walker was misplaced." The woman behind the desk let out a short snort.

"Figures...You would be surprised just how often that happens. I hope the girl hasn't been giving you any trouble?" She asked as she got up and walked over to a long row of filing cabinets.

"Haven't the foggiest. I've never met the child myself. Why do you ask? Is she prone to getting into mischief?" Narcissa asked in a bored voice. She was trying to portray an annoyed assistant running an unwanted errand for her boss. It would not do well to send off any red flags right from the off. By the other woman's reaction she seemed to be buying it without question.

"She doesn't seek it out if that what you mean. It's just...has a way of finding her all on its own," She said as she dug into a file cabinet.

"Really, how so? If the child is going to be a problem my boss would certainly like to know about it." Narcissa asked with just a hint of concern. She wanted to get her a little off balance and see what she

would let slip. She couldn't afford to use magic here. She could feel the magical signature on this place. To use magic would only bring unwanted attention. She would have to do this the old-fashion way.

"Don't get me wrong. From a distance she seemed like an agreeable enough child, but whenever she is around anyone...things just happen. She just seems to bring out people's aggression. Oh, here it is." The woman walked over to Narcissa and handed her a large file. She gave it a quick once over and was amazed by the number of times the girl was injured. She saw that she was diagnosed with Epsolhyrphenite by a Dr. D. Fudge. A short description of the rare so-called disease that was responsible for her hair spontaneously changing color. Honestly! The gullibility of these Muggles? Put enough letters in a word and they'll believe it's a disease.

"Is she accident prone? I see a lot of injuries here."

"I've only worked here for about a year. The one you would want to talk to about it is Mrs. Lancaster. She retired last year. I can get you her address when I make copies of the file if you like?" The woman said in an attempt to shift responsibility away from her. She seemed more nervous that the question warranted, but pushing the issue could make her shut down altogether.

"That would be lovely. My boss is a stickler for details. Do you have all the records on the girl's birth parents? I don't see any in here." Narcissa offered the file back to her. She snatched it up and looked through it.

"That's odd. It's usually right on top." The woman frantically searched through the file. Narcissa got the feeling she was one of those people that liked everything in order and got flustered when they were not. Narcissa decided to take this opportunity to probe her further, while her mind was concentrating on another task.

"Did she have many friends?"

"No she was pretty much a loner here." Muggle Repellent Charm.

"What about staff?"

"The only one that seemed to like her was Mrs. Lancaster." Squib most likely.

"Enemies?"

"That would be Adam. They fought like cats and dogs, but since she left, all he does is ask if she's alright. I swear he must be bipolar." Aggression Hex. "Wait! We have the old records down in the basement. It shouldn't take me more than ten minutes to find them."

"That's fine, take your time."

The woman rushed out of the office, which was just fine with Narcissa. She took the opportunity to look around. Thankfully she had cast a magic detection charm on her eyes before she came inside the orphanage. She sensed magic all over the place. That was more than a little bizarre, considering this particular orphanage was not on the approved list by the Ministry of Magic. She had a strong feeling that the records in the basement were long gone as well. Whoever was behind this was good at covering their tracks.

The door to the office opened and a boy about twelve years old walked in. He had sandy colored hair and a sturdy build. His eyes seemed to draw her attention. They appeared to not fit him somehow. She then saw the magic radiating off the Muggle boy head.

"Hi there," He said in a casual voice.

"Hello, how are you?" She answered and asked. He gave her a shrug and walked over to a bench and plopped down on it. He seemed to be waiting for something. By the look on his face he wasn't terribly happy about it.

"Are you in trouble?" Narcissa asked when her curiosity got the better of her.

"Usually." Was his only response. She got the distinct feeling he didn't like grownups.

"Well it's nice to meet you Mr. Usually In Trouble." Lily once told her that a good joke could loosen a tongue better than a threat. The boy laughed at that, so she presumed she at least got that part right.

"Good one, my name is Adam." You don't say.

"Rose Evans at your service young man." Narcissa extended her hand to him, and he took it. He quickly looked over his shoulder at the door, and bit his bottom lip. He hadn't let go of her hand yet. He leaned in as if to whisper something to her.

"I'm having a good day so...she'll be coming soon."

"Who will be coming soon?" Narcissa asked with general concern in her voice. That was what the boy reacted to. He gave an odd look as he mentally debated with himself. When he looked back at her he had a determined, yet vulnerable look. The magic around his head changed color from a soft blue to a dark red. He grinded his teeth as he fought against the compulsion trying to control him. Narcissa marveled as this young Muggle fought against the magic, and mentally cheered when its color was blue again.

"That mean cat lady. The one that makes me hate Emma. I don't mean to be a bad boy, really I don't. I got out of the box she put me in. If I'm not mean she will put me back in again. I don't want to go back in the box." Adam begged her. He was talking really fast, as if he was afraid he wouldn't be able to get it all out. He also didn't talk like a boy of twelve. She guessed he was six maybe seven.

"You're not the only one in there...are you?" Narcissa asked as she tapped his forehead. He nodded his answer. She took a deep breath to steady herself. "We don't have much time, do we?" Again he answered her by moving his head side to side. "You know what I am, don't you?" His head moved up and down, and looked to her purse. "Do you trust me?" Again, up and down, then she felt a piece of paper being pushed into her hand. "Tell her I'm sorry, I-I just wasn't strong enough." He quickly stood up, tears in his eyes, and ran from the room.

The mother in Narcissa wanted to go after him, to cuddle him, and promise him that the mean cat lady would never hurt him again. The Pure-Blooded Witch in her knew that doing that would only alert the ones that did this to him and Emma.

It made perfect sense to her and she hated that it did. All those years with the Death Eaters had given her insight into the twisted working of their psyche. Come across a young Metamorphmagus without any family to miss her. Bind her magic and hide her away

from the Wizarding World. Make all the Muggles around hate her, forcing her to isolate herself. Deprive her of any form of kindness so, when you give her what she craves so desperately, she'll do anything you ask. Then all you have to do is wait until she reaches age. Train her and then watch the galleons roll in.

The question was who had found her. They had made some mistakes. Mrs. Lancaster was a squib, so the Muggle Repellent Charm had no effect on her. They couldn't corrupt the purity of a little boy, so they opted to lock him away in his own mind and implanted their own tormentor. It would have to be adjusted each year, but they missed one and Adam got out.

She opened the folded piece of paper and saw a drawing that could have only been made by a young child. It showed a boy on his knees, begging a girl with rainbow colored hair to forgive him. In a bubble over his head were the words.

I'm soooo sorry Emmy!

The cat lady made me do it!

Narcissa's heart just about broke, and she had to cover her mouth to keep from crying out. He should be angry with what was done to him, but all he wanted was her forgiveness.

She would have to wait until that woman came back with the file. Then she would need to seek out this Mrs. Lancaster. She was sure she would be able to find out about Emma's parents from her. Dobby would shadow Adam. If this cat lady or any other magical person showed their sorry arses, he would be ordered to get her immediately. I failed Draco, but I swear on my magic. I won't fail you Adam...I won't fail you.

"Harry where are we going? I don't want to be late for class. " Emma asked as Harry led her down an empty hallway.

"This won't take too long Cub. There is someone I want you to meet." Harry said over his shoulder. She so loved his nickname for her. She knew it was some Animagus thing, but she didn't care. She felt protected and loved whenever he said it, and that was all that really mattered to her. Emma noticed that there were no portraits on

the walls and found it odd. Harry finally stopped in front of a door halfway down the hall. He opened it and motioned her to go in. Emma cocked a brow, but went in all the same. It was an open room that was half the size of the Great Hall. It was empty except for a desk on the far wall. A lone person was sitting on the desk with their head bowed down and their legs swaying back and forth. From a distance it looked like Harry's mum. Emma turned to look at Harry.

"Harry I've met your mum before. I've had class with her yesterday you know."

"Are you sure that's my mum?" He asked with a grin. She looked back and the girl looked up. She could have sworn that it was her twin sister, if she had a twin sister. Did she have a twin sister? She was pretty sure that would be something she would have remembered. She had a brother out there that she was more than happy to forget, but a sister? That would just rock her socks. Emma's natural inquisitive nature kicked in and she started to walk over to the girl sitting on the desk. She continued swinging her legs back and forth as she waited for her to get closer.

"A-are y-you my sister?" Emma asked timidly as the girl hopped off the desk and smiled at her. She winked at Emma and when her eye opened back up it was a different color than the other one.

"Kind of...in a way." She giggled and then winked the other eye, to reveal another color. Then her hair changed to a bold purple and she grew two feet. When the transformation was complete she looked to be in her twenties. Emma's mouth just dropped to the floor. She extended her hand to Emma. She took it and felt an instant connection to Tonks.

"Wow!" Was all she managed to get out; it was the only thing that seemed to fit.

"Welcome to the Sisterhood Emma Walker," The more experienced Metamorphmagus said with a wink. Emma grinned broadly at that. A feeling of belonging swelled within her.

"Emma this is my Aunt Nympy, but if you value your life, call her Tonks."

"Huh?" Emma asked after she saw the woman shoot daggers with her eyes at Harry, who just blew her a kiss in response. Tonks rolled eyes and shook her head before addressing her.

"It's a long story sweetie, and I believe you need to get to class. If you want I can help you train up." Emma nodded her head eagerly. "I thought so...tell you what. Meet me here about four tonight and we'll see where you're at and where you need work. Oh, and one more thing. Because you're in the Sisterhood now, you'll never have to go back to that Orphanage again. In fact, if I know this cheeky git, he has already taken care of that."

"Really?" Emma asked as she looked back at Harry. He was smiling at her in a way that made her warm all over. Like things were finally going to go her way.

"You betcha! Now scoot, you're going to be late." Tonks said bringing Emma back down to earth.

"Bugger! I got only a minute to get to Potions and it's on the other side of the castle. Snape is gonna kill me."

"Is that all?" Harry asked.

"Harry what are you ta- Aaahhhh! Bugger me! Warn a girl before you do something like that Harry!" Emma shrieked at the panther that was looking at her. He had given her quite a fright, but still she couldn't help but smile at the majestic looking panther.

"Just hold on tight Emma, you're about to get the ride of your life." Tonks told her as she put the girls arm around the panther's neck. She looked back at Tonks unsure how that was supposed to help. Harry's aunt just waved at her before she sunk in to her own shadow. She was in complete darkness, and her entire body tingled. Then there was a flash of another part of the castle, as they leapt from one shadow to another. This happened several more times. Once they came out right behind Mr. Filch. She was sure that they were caught for sure, as he was turning around when his cat hissed at them. They disappeared right into the perpetually narked old codger's shadow. They finally came out right in front of Snape's classroom. Emma's hair looked like she was just come out of a

tornado. She was bent over with her hands on her knees and breathing hard. She slowly turned her head to look at Harry.

"H-harry...that...was..." She said each word after a heavy breath. Then she jumped up in the air as she swung her fist to the heavens and cheered. "Totally Wicked!"

The doors to the classroom bursted open and Snape charged out into the hall. Harry shot to her and they once again sank into their shadow before Snape caught sight of them. She came out of a shadow in a dark corner of the classroom. She quickly took the empty seat next to Mark.

"Thanks for saving me a seat," She whispered to him after she kissed him on the cheek. He was blushing crimson red and she totally loved it. Snape closed the door to the classroom and made his way to his desk, rather irked that he didn't catch whoever made the disturbance in the hall. He stopped where Emma was sitting. He looked at her, then to the door, and back to her again. Emma looked up at him innocently. He appeared as if he was going to say something, but grumbled something under his breath and continued to his desk. Pursa and Gabby looked back at her and mouthed how at the same time. Emma mouthed later back to them. The both shrugged and turned back around. Emma snuck a glance back at the dark corner of the classroom where she came from. In the darkness she saw a green eye wink at her, before completely disappearing. She smiled to herself as she took stock of her morning so far. She met another of her kind, was promised to get training, was told she would never have to go back to that foul Orphanage again, took an ace ride across the castle, snaked past the beastly groundskeeper, kissed the boy she fancied, and royally narked off her tosser of a Potions Professor. Sometimes life was really good.

Daphne was sitting in front of a pile of open books in the library, all of which were on Ancient Runes. She had a free period today and planned to put it to good use. That distorted rune on the back of Emma's neck kept popping into her head. It seemed familiar and it was driving her crazy. She had drawn a picture of it for reference, but she was sure it had to be more intricate than that.

She was so engrossed in her endeavor that she didn't notice Crabbe and Goyle walking up behind her, or that the librarian was nowhere to be seen. She was currently locking up the library and casting

Silencing Charms under Crabbe's Imperious Curse. Then she was instructed to take a very lengthy kip.

Vincent had finally gotten his wand back and he planned on putting it to good use. It was time for Greengrass to learn her place. He was using a spell to make him silent, but Daphne caught his scent anyway and reached for her wand. He grabbed her by the back of her head and slammed it down hard on the table three times. She dropped her wand as all she could see were stars. He pulled her to her feet and threw her to Goyle, who pulled her arms behind her back and bound them together with a charm. He then grabbed her by her hair and pulled her head back to look at Vincent. Even dazed as she was, she still had a defiant look on her face. Crabbe pulled back his fist with the intent of knocking that annoying superior look off her face.

"Do it you impotent little wanker!" Daphne yelled in a vain attempt that someone would hear her.

"I'll show you impotent bitch!" He yelled back, secure in the knowledge that no one would come to her aid. He balled up his fist and drove it into her gut. Daphne's eyes felt as if they would leave their sockets, as all the air in her lungs was forced out of her body. Again her head was pulled back up as she tried to get air back into her lungs. "I'm not going to hurt that pretty little face of yours. Speaking of pretty, I've wanted to have a peek at these cute puppies for a long time," He said before he ripped open her blouse, to reveal a red laced bra that was standing between him and what he wanted.

"Take a good look Vincent. They're going to be the last ones you ever going to see." Daphne threatened in false bravado. She was scared, but she wasn't about to let them see it. They both laughed at her. She tried to break free, but Goyle held her in place.

"That bra looked expensive...looked." He said as he ripped it open and grinned at what laid beneath. Daphne ground her teeth as he gawked at her exposed breasts. "Huh? I always pictured them darker and pointer. Come to think of it, your nipples could do with a little color. What do you say Greg?" The git laughed out his approval. Daphne braced herself for what was about to come. Crabbe pinched her right nipple and twisted and pulled hard. It was all she could do not to cry out, which was what he wanted. She bore the pain just to

deny him. A vain attempt to cling to some resemblance of control of the situation that she knew was lost.

"Damn! I didn't think it could stretch that far?" Crabbe gloated as he twisted it more when she didn't give him what he wanted to hear. Her pain intensified to the point she couldn't think straight. It wasn't until tears escaped her eyes that he let go. He would have preferred to hear her cry out for mercy, but it was still a victory. He couldn't remember a time that he ever saw her cry before.

"Girl's got some pain threshold Vincent."

"Just starting Gregory. She'll be singing her submission before you know it." He told his partner in crime as he admired his work. Daphne right nipple was swollen and growing darker by the second. "Look they don't match...can't have that." He laughed out as he repeated his previous action to her left one. Again Daphne fought to not cry out, and was starting to wonder if it was really worth it. After a minute that felt like an hour she let him have what he wanted.

"Now was that so hard? Look, they match again. Gregory why don't you have a feel, while I see if she's a true blond." Vincent taunted her. A pair of rough hands reached around and pulled her until her back was pressed firmly against his chest then proceeded to grope her. She fought against Crabbe attempt to remove her lower garments to no avail; she was nickerless in less than a minute.

"Yes! You owe me five galleons Goyle...true blond." He looked over her shoulder and between the valley of her breasts to see her golden lower locks and groaned. Daphne stopped fighting to get free. She now had herself a plan.

The moment her arms were bound it was pointless to turn into her Lynx form. She would prefer to handle this herself, but it had obviously progressed beyond that point. It was time to call for help. The advantage of being an Animagus, was that other of her kind could hear, due to their heightened sense of hearing, other of their kinds call. Even through Silencing Charms, because they were designed for only humans. With that in mind she made her play.

"Fine you win! Just get it over with so I can get on with my day."

"Finally wising up Greengrass, though I'm a little disappointed, I was hoping you would put up more of a fight."

"That twig's so tiny I probably won't feel a thing at all." She said in a huff as her legs parted.

"I'll show you little bitch." Crabbe growled as he shoved his wand into his back pocket and dropped his pants and boxers.

"You know, you really should have taken off my shoes Vinny." Thanks for the open target wanker.

"Why's that whore?"

"This." Daphne stomped her heals down on Goyle's toes, and slammed the back of her head into his nose. He let go of her and fell back with one hand on his bleeding nose and one on his tender foot, as he hopped on his good one. Balance was never his strong suit and gravity was a cruel Mistress. He ended up knocking the table over in the process. She took a half step back and then kicked Crabbe in his bits with all her might. He doubled over in pain holding his groin. She followed through with a kick to his throat. Crabbe fell backwards onto the floor. Daphne roared out for help and prayed one of her brethren heard it, while the two of them were down, she looked frantically for her wand.

The table she was working at now knocked over and the books were scattered all over the floor. She started kicking them in the hopes that her wand laid beneath one. Goyle started to get up, so she ran down a book aisle to hide.

"There's nowhere to go whore! The door's locked. You're going to get it twice as bad now!" He yelled out. He rolled Crabbe over and saw that his face was blue. Daphne's kick had crushed his throat. Gregory healed his throat and Vincent breathed in air, and then started to cough uncontrollably. He waved Goyle to go look for Daphne as he relearned to breathe.

Daphne was hopping from aisle to aisle in an attempt to keep one foot ahead them. Crabbe soon joined in the hunt. For another few minutes she managed to evade her would-be-rapists, but she soon ran out of places to hide, and started to panic. She forced herself to breathe slowly to stay calm.

She was halfway down one of the aisles when Goyle appeared at the end of it. She quickly turned around to run only to see Crabbe at the other. He wasn't walking too fast because of her previous kick to the bits. With that in mind she charged the big dumb one, screaming like a wild woman with her arms bound behind her back. Five feet before she reached him she dove on the ground and rolled up. Using her momentum she delivered double heel kick between his legs. Goyle's feet left the floor for a few seconds and when he came down his legs couldn't support his weight. Daphne was already cocking back for another go, when she saw he was collapsing on her. She aimed for his chest but connected with his jaw instead and prayed that cracking sound was his jaw and not his neck. Either way his eyes rolled up, and his dead weight crushed her under him. She frantically tried to get him off of her as the other one advanced on her..

Crabbe pulled her out from under him by her hair. He threw her face first against a bookshelf and punched her three times in the kidneys hard. Daphne's legs buckled as her body succumbed to the pain and she fell to the floor. He then dragged her back into the open area by her hair, with Daphne kicking and screaming all the way. He pulled the table back upright, and with victorious glee bent her over it.

"Just for all the trouble you've given me. I'm going to drive it up your arse first bitch. Then you're going to clean it with your mouth, and then I'll plug you again." He threatened.

"And they say romance is dead." Daphne gave her last defiant jab before Crabbe stripped her of her dignity. She then heard a growl that wasn't her own. She looked up to see a jaguar leap on the other end of the table with fur that looked to be quicksilver. Its vibrant brown eyes seemed to pulsate with power. A low snarl started to build in its mouth as its fur started to crackle with static electricity. Crabbe backed up with a look of pure horror on his face and shaking pulled his wand out. The pulsating in the beast's eyes increased rapidly until it remained white. Daphne couldn't look away from the legendary creature.

"Avada Ked-" Crabbe started, only to be cut short as a lightning bolt shot out of the jaguar's mouth and hit him square in the chest. He was thrown across the room until he crashed into a bookshelf.

Several books could be seen on fire through a gaping hole, the size of a Quaffle, in his chest.

The jaguar changed back and a red-headed girl collapsed on the table. She was breathing heavily, and Daphne remembered how much the first full transformation takes out of you. After a few minutes, Ginny Weasley looked up at Daphne.

"Hi, how ya doing?" Ginny managed to get out.

"Oh, the usual mostly naked, bound, and bent over a table...and you?"

"Mastered my Jaguar form and shot lightning out my mouth. So by Hogwarts' standards, I guess that makes it a Tuesday."

"Actually I think it's Wednesday,"

"Whatever, I'm too knackered to argue about it."

"Well before you take a kip, could you unbind me? I'm kind of starkers over here."

By the time Harry got there Daphne was unbound and wrapped in Ginny's robe with a blank expression on her face. Ginny was trying to mend the clothes that were ripped off of the girl's body.

"Sorry Daphne I'm pants at this." Ginny grunted out in frustration.

"To tell you the truth, I would rather burn them than ever wear them again."

Harry took in the scene, pointed to what was left of Crabbe and asked how. Ginny timidly raised her hand and gave a weak smile.

"Again how?" He asked with a look of complete confusion on his face.

"He doesn't know?" Daphne asked her.

"I was gonna, just a few things happened here and there." Ginny answered in a hushed voice.

"Then he doesn't know you're..."

"Could you...shut up?"

"Hey I'm standing right here! Now could someone please tell me what the hell just happened here?" Harry asked interrupting their private little pow-wow. Both girls looked at him innocently. Oh Hell! This isn't going to be good.

"Sweetie...I'm a Tempest Jaguar," Ginny said in the sweetest voice she could muster.

"You're shitting me?"

"Huh?"

"It's a Muggle saying...you get use to it after awhile," Ginny answered Daphne.

"Actually, that was Muggle and Yank, but that's beside the point. Okay, you can explain later, now what about that one over there?" Harry gestured to the leg sticking out of the end of an aisle. This time Daphne raised her hand, looking as sheepish as Ginny had earlier. Harry ran his hands through his hair and started to pace, as he cycled through all the possible scenario's and outcomes. Fuck it!

"Duncan," Harry called his house elf.

"Yes Master Harry," Answered the regal elf. Daphne was surprised by his manner of speaking, as well as the clothes he was wearing. He looked over at the two girls and bowed to them. "It's good to see you again Mistress Ginny." That surprised Daphne even more.

"Duncan I need you to take them to my trunk, then rally all the elves at Potter Manor. We need to clean house like yesterday." Duncan nodded and walked over to the two girls. Both of which jumped to their feet and started protesting robustly.

"SHUT IT!" Harry yelled and cut them off. Both stopped immediately, more out of shock than anything else. Before they could start again Duncan popped them away.

A/N: There you go. This was a difficult chapter to write, and I hope I portrayed everyone correctly. As always let me know what you think.

It had become painfully clear to Sirius that it was pointless to even attempt to teach class today. Not after the Howler that Harry received combined with the morning's copy of the Daily Prophet. It was all the students were talking about. Several times his lecture was interrupted with questions about his godson. Either it was if he was proud of him, how he learned to fight so well, if he and Ginny were seriously together or just a fling. There were also questions about the battle itself, which he couldn't answer because it would just cast suspicion on him and Lily.

The Awards Ceremony where Harry, Ginny, and a lot of other private citizens were going to receive the Order of Merlin was going to be held at Hogsmeade on Saturday. He understood what the Minister was trying to do, building up public support and all, but the man was seriously daft if he didn't think they could see what his true goal was. He wanted to turn Harry and Ginny into the Ministry's own Poster Boy and Girl. He could just imagine the Wizzarding Romance Novel that Rita Skeeter would write about them if she knew half the truth. Thankfully they had gotten her under their control right from the off.

But Hogsmeade? The Ministry of Magic or even Hogwarts would be better. At least they would be properly protected. There were just too many unknown variables to having it in Hogsmeade. It was secluded from the Muggle community and too rich of a target for Voldemort to let pass by. Perhaps that was what Scrimgeour wanted. It was a chance to show his power and secure his position as Minister for years to come. Plus it gave him the chance once again to thumb his nose at Dumbledore. Frickin Politicians.

At least he was doing it in broad daylight. That eliminated Vampires, Werewolves, and for the most part Dementors. Hogsmeade was still too close to the Forbidden Forest for his liking. There was no telling what old Butthead had in there. Well he and the pup would have to take a midnight stroll, now wouldn't they?

Sirius closed his eyes and started to rub his temples with his feet crossed on his desk when he heard a soft rapping on his office door. He groaned if it was another student asking him a stupid question he was going to hex someone.

"Go away. This is my free hour, so unless you're a half naked Witch...I'm busy!" Sirius yelled at the door not even bothering to open his eyes. He heard the door open and then close.

"Oh my, I didn't know there was a dress code Professor Black. Am I to be punished?" Came a sultry voice he hadn't heard for far too long. He jerked up so fast that the chair fell back and took his dignity with him. As he scrambled to get to his feet he was greeted with a sweet giggle he didn't realize how much he'd missed until that very moment. He hopped to his feet and quickly did a once over to make sure he didn't look too disheveled. That earned him another giggle, not that he minded all that much.

Leaning with her back on the door was Gabriella Greengrass. Just as picturesque and beautiful as the last time he had looked at her. Her blond hair was now parted on her right side, a lock of it pulled strategically behind her ear so that her neck was exposed from the lobe to the collarbone. She displayed the very spot that she knew he couldn't resist, as well as the one that with the right amount of attention would release the most exquisite sounds from her lips. Slytherins never play fair. As if she had heard his mental objection, her lips curved in response.

"Hi." Sirius knew it was lame but it was all he could come up with. It appeared she could still get him flustered with just a look. He hadn't seen her in seventeen plus years and his first impulse was to throw her on his desk and plunder her.

"Hi back." There was an uneasiness in her voice that caught his attention. Perhaps this was just as awkward for her. He came around his desk and crossed over to her. He stopped just short of her, unsure of the boundaries that now existed between them. He looking so intently into her crystal baby blues that he missed her slight frown. She pushed herself off the door and closed the gap between them. They were both well within their danger zone. Her scent invaded his senses, and it took all of his self control to not follow his first impulse. He went to speak but she put a finger to his lips and hushed him.

"No...let me just have a proper look at you," She asked him, as her eyes rapidly traveled over him, burning every detail to memory. She mentally compared it to the younger version of him she kept locked away within her mind.

"Well, look at this nicely trimmed goatee. You look all Ming the Merciless." She teased as she lightly tugged on the hair just under his chin. Sirius grinned as he remembered when they snuck out one night to watch a Muggle movie. She was so engrossed by it that several times she literally jumped on him. He came to realize that scary parts in a movie were a bloke's best friend. She liked it so much she suggested they watch it again, though he didn't recall watching much of the movie the second time.

"Cheeks all smooth," Gabriella's hand slid over his skin and he turned his cheek into her warm touch.

"But this hair pulled back into a respectable and tight ponytail, that won't do at all." She reached around to the back of his head and pulled off the clip with the Black family crest on it, and lazily tossed it somewhere behind her. She then ran her fingers through his hair making it a right old mess. Sirius didn't even attempt to put up a mock protest. He just enjoyed the sensations it was sending all over his body. Gabriella stepped back to admire her work.

"There! Now you look like a proper scoundrel." She finished with a beaming smile. Her crystal blue eyes drawing him in like they always did. I'm so in over my head.

"So I read that congratulations are in order. I'm so proud of you," Sirius said in an attempt to gain some kind of control over himself.

"What? Oh pish posh, you mean that little award the Minister is passing out to everyone," Gabriella said with a backwards wave of her hand as if it was nothing. Sirius knew better than that.

"The Order of Merlin is hardly a party favor Gaby. My godson said you were simply amazing, but I figured that out a long time ago." Sirius repressed the urge to run his hand through her hair like he always did. Gabriella smiled at the use of his pet name for her. It had been far too long since she had heard it. She wanted to reward him with a kiss on the spot, but fought the desire no matter how strong it was. She casually walked around his office mock inspecting it; the act would buy her time to get her feeling under control. No matter how much she felt like a sixteen year old at the moment, she knew she wasn't anymore.

"Such high praise Suri, you'll make me blush," Gabriella said with a playful smile as she picked up a picture and looked at it. Then she put it back and faced him. "Don't act for one second that you weren't there Lord Black." Sirius raised a brow then shot off a charm to ensure their privacy.

"What ever are you talking about? I was here teaching class." Sirius knew it was pointless to argue with her. They both knew she was right, but old habits die hard. Besides, he loved playing their game.

"Well, let's see." Gabriella tapped her index finger to her lips as she pretended to think on it. "These dashing Rogues in crimson robes and masks of animals came to our rescue. They were the real heroes of the battle if you ask me, and are the ones that deserve the Order of Merlin. Come to think of it, there was this one that had a dog mask on, really nice bum."

"You could see that through the robe?"

"One you're interrupting, two don't get cheeky with me, and three a woman just knows these things.'

"I stand corrected."

"What did I just say about being cheeky?" Gabriella asked as she threatened him with her wand.

"To not to." Again Sirius did his impression of Disney's Tow Mater. Gabriella shook her head, but couldn't keep from smiling. Irritating as he could sometimes be, she really missed this.

"As I was saying before you decided to...well to be you. There was this Wizard in a dog mask with a really cute bum. The thing is, if you don't want to be recognized," Gabriella stepped up to him and back into their danger zone."You probably shouldn't wave around a big Claymore Sword with the Crest of the House of Black on it." She told him and emphasized by pushing his head back with her finger between his eyes.

Her eyes were welling up when his came back to meet them. She quickly looked down to hide her vulnerability. Prideful woman. Sirius chuckled on the inside as he handed her a took it without protest before looking up. Shaking her head as she dried her eyes, she

mentally berated herself. Seventeen plus years I'm a stone and two minutes with him and a weeping twit.

"This is all your fault you know."

"Usually is."

"Just shut it and let me get this out. I've waited seventeen years to say this and you will damn well let me have my say." It came off more as a plea than a command. Regardless, his silence told her that he would do as his former lover requested. When she looked up at him he saw both fire and frailty in her eyes.

"This wasn't supposed to happen. It wasn't part of the plan. Leave it up to my scoundrel to go and muck it all up. I love and hate you for that you know?" This time Sirius chuckled out loud and she joined him, then lightly slapped him on his arm.

"The logical, practical, and accomplished mind of Gabriella Drake never stood a chance against the chaotic and magnificently outlandishness that is and always will be Sirius Black."

"True, but it was always fun to watch you try."

"Again with the interrupting. Am I going to have to hex you?"

"I suppose that depends on the location and the hex."

"You're incorrigible. You know that right?"

"It's a gift."

"It wasn't a compliment."

"In my mind luv, it was." She gave him a look Lily was fond of giving him. The translation was simply put; you're on thin ice buddy boy."Sorry you were telling me that I screwed up your plan."

"You were supposed to be my guilty pleasure, my forbidden dark lover, my final fling before I was saddled with a husband and life that wasn't of my choosing. A warm memory to comfort me in my cold bed, as my unwanted husband took comfort in the arms of his mistress. You see, I had found out about the Marriage Contract the

summer before you crashed into me and changed my world. I was so angry at my parents back then. You came along and I saw the perfect opportunity to defy them. I truly regret that Suri. You deserved so much better than that." The remorseful expression written on her face tore at Sirius' heart. Her arms were crossed as she hugged herself in an attempt to keep it together. She couldn't bear to look at him, to see the betrayal in his eyes. She felt Sirius gently caress her cheek. She didn't feel that she deserved any comfort, but turned into it all the same. He ran his finger down her jaw line until it was under her chin. Slowly he tilted it up until her eyes locked with his. There was no anger or malice in them, only forgiveness and understanding.

"I knew that at the beginning of our relationship it was based in rebellion. You were a Slytherin and I was a Gryffindor, I'm not that bloody thick." Sirius confessed and she let out a small laugh. He wrapped his arms around her and she returned the gesture without hesitation. She took in the comfort and understanding he was giving like it was a life line. She mumbled her thanks into his chest and he squeezed her a little tighter. Gabriella took longer to regain her composure than what was necessary. Her former lover was once again in her arms and she selfishly wanted to enjoy it, but with much reluctance she finally broke the connection.

"Okay I don't mind that kind of interruption, but I wasn't done yet." Gabriella took a long breath then continued. "I was a spoiled selfish girl that didn't take your feelings into consideration. I thought I was in control of the situation. You were a Pureblood and first born of the House of Black, so my parents couldn't outright oppose our friendship without insulting your family. Did you know that your mum paid me a little visit? It seemed that she thought I would be a good influence on you. Boy did that backfire. Like the Marauder that you truly are, you broke through my defenses and plundered my heart. I hate and love you for that too."

"I knew about my mum trying to get you to change me. That was the last straw for me. It was one of the main reasons that I ran away. Not my most thought out plan mind you. I suppose me being the Black Heir was the only thing keeping your dad in check."

"Pretty much. Once word reached him, he demanded I break from you on the spot."

"Just so you know, I really hate your father."

"Just so you know, I never shared a kind word with him ever again, not after what he did to the both of us. Unladylike as it was, I even spat on his grave. Told him it was from you."

"Just so you know the first thing I did when I got back was piss on his grave."

"That's sweet, but I would have preferred that you had come for a proper sit-down with me."

"I haven't forgotten the rules luv."

"Both of those men are burning for their sin if there is any justice in the universe. They no longer control my fate." Gabriella saw anger flare in his eyes. Sirius hand shot out and was on the back of her neck in the blink of an eye. His index finger traced the rune that was branded on her by those bastards.

"This tells me that one still does." Sirius growled through clinched teeth.

"He's not an evil man Suri." Gabriella pleaded with him. She knew that look all too well.

"He sure as hell isn't a good man! A good man would have released you!" Sirius' anger flared up even more. He couldn't believe she was defending him. He moved away from her, because he really wanted to hit something right now.

"Maybe a brave Gryffindor should have snatched me away from it all! You picked a hell of a time to start playing by the rules Suri! Then you would have three beautiful daughters and not him!" She matched his rage with one of her own. Not everything was so black and white. He should know that better than anyone.

"We both know what would have happened to you if I did!" Damn this woman is infuriating! Does she really think I don't know that!

"That was my choice to make!" The two of them shot daggers at each other, both believing that they were right and pissed that the other couldn't see that. When Gabriella spoke again her voice was

soft and soothing. She saw that this was getting them nowhere, plus this was the question she had to wait seventeen years to ask him. "Why didn't you respect me enough to let me make my own decision?"

Sirius plopped down on his desk and bowed his head. The weight of everything that was and wasn't said seemed too much to bear. He mumbled something that she didn't quite hear.

"What?" Gabriella asked and when he looked up she could tell he was barely holding his tears back. That alone told her everything she needed to know, but still she wanted to hear his words.

"I said what kind of man would force the woman that he loves to make that insane choice?" Loves? He still loves me? She walked over to him and rubbed his cheek with hers. It wasn't breaking the rules and conveyed what only another Animagi would understand. They fell into a loving embrace that seemed to last forever, or perhaps they just wished it would. Both giving and taking comfort that they were denied for too long.

"Some scoundrel you turned out to be?" She whispered in his ear, and they both laughed at that. All too soon they were interrupted by the sound of students entering his classroom. She slid her cheek across his until their lips were almost touching. The urge to kiss him was unbearable, but the rules couldn't be broken. No matter how cruel it felt, her daughters had to come first. She stepped back and kissed her finger and then she put it to his lips. A tear ran down his cheek, but she caught it just as it left his jaw and pulled it to her bosom. Sirius kissed the tip of two of his fingers and ran it down her neck to the spot she was most sensitive. The soft moan that left her lips was a bittersweet reward. Gabriella sadly walked over to the fireplace and stepped inside before she looked back at him.

"I would have given up my magic for you."

"I know luv. I just couldn't let you."

"Aidin's Grace," Gabriella said clearly and flashed away. Sirius smiled at her hidden message. She wasn't going home, and she was leaving a candle in the window for him. If he remembered correctly, Aidin was the Celtic Goddess of Love and Sexuality. Yep, in way over my head.

After a very long shower and more tears than she thought were humanly possible Daphne emerged from the bathroom of Harry's guest bedroom. She cautiously took in her surroundings. Though initially she was very vexed at Harry for shipping her and Ginny off to this place, she soon took comfort in knowing that if she was a good judge of character, then this place was more secure than her own home. Judging by the room she was now standing in, it was just as comfortable too. The huge queen size four corner bed looked very inviting. The only reason she didn't act on her first impulse was that she was sure that a nightmare awaited her if she did. To the left of it was a bedside table with a tray of tea and an assortment of different kinds of comfort foods and, if she wasn't mistaken, a goblet of dreamless sleeping potion. In the plush and cozy looking chair next to the table was a huge reassuringly soft bath robe, along with her wand. It looks like Weasley thought of everything.

She sprinted across the room and snatched up her wand like it was Christmas morning. Daphne clasped it tightly to her chest and held it in both her hands and took in a shaky breath. She felt complete once more. She had often heard her father say that his wand was an extension of himself. Until that moment, she hadn't realized what an intricate part of her psyche her wand was.

Daphne heard a noise coming from down the hall. A unfounded fear invaded her mind and she momentary lost the ability to breath properly. She quickly locked the door and slowly slid her back down it until she was sitting on the floor. Once she got her breathing under control, a feeling of disgust filled her up. It wasn't an uncommon emotion for her to have, but the person she was disgusted with was.

Was she really this fragile? Was she actually going to let a bottom feeder like Crabbe turn her into a blubbering twit afraid of a simple noise? NO! She was Daphne Greengrass! The Ice Queen of Slytherin! With just one of her chilling glares she could make younger students wet themselves. She wasn't weak! She was smart, strong in both mind and body, ruthless in a fight, and, and...a killer. She was a killer. She had taken the life of someone she had known since she could walk. Under the weight of that thought she broke again.

She buried her face in her arms and released what she thought she had no more of. She wasn't sure just how long she sat there crying like a feeble little girl. Her tears weren't for Goyle that was for sure. He didn't deserve any of hers. Nor was she crying for her lost innocence. She had seen too much in her life to delude herself into thinking she still possessed that. She didn't cry for the fear of being shipped off to Azkaban. She was positive that Harry wouldn't let that happen. She could see it in his eyes. He was now doing what needed to be done to protect her and Ginny.

It wasn't the legal ramifications he was worried about. Voldemort wouldn't allow the killing of two junior Death Eaters to go unanswered. He was protecting not only her, but her entire family. As for Dumbledore, there was no way he wouldn't use this to his advantage.

She wasn't crying for what almost happened to her. That would have been self-indulgent. She had know some girls that had suffered more than that, one of them being somewhere on the other side of the door she was now leaning against.

In truth she wasn't sure just why she kept crying. She imagined it was her mind and body's way of performing its own counter-curse. Daphne knew she was grasping at straws, but it would just have to do. She decided to just ride out the storm of the uncontrollable emotions. Like I really have a choice in the matter.

A soft rapping at the door broke her out of her self reflection. She quickly wiped the tears away from her cheeks and stood up and straightened herself up as much as was possible before answering. She wasn't sure just how much of a rep she had left, but she would protect it for the sake of her ego if nothing else.

"Yes," She cursed herself for sounding so weak and pathetic. Daphne cleared her throat and repeated. "Yes." Good that was much better. To show weakness is to invite strife.

"May I come in?" The sound of Ginny Weasley came from the other side of the door. To Daphne she sounded nervous. For the life of her she couldn't understand why. She unlocked the door and waited for her to come in.

Once in the room both girls looked at each other cautiously. Daphne was doing her best to project her Ice Queen persona and failing miserably at it. Ginny had been where she was before and felt the urge to give her a comforting hug. She just wasn't sure if it would do more harm than good.

"Thank you," Daphne said breaking the uncomfortable silence in the room.

"Um...you're welcome. I just wish I could have gotten there sooner," She honestly said.

"You shouldn't have had to come at all. I knew better. I can't believe they got the best of me like that." Daphne verbally berated herself.

"Hey, shite happens. All we can do is survive it and hopefully learn from our mistakes." Ginny spoke from experience.

"I guess you know that better than anyone else huh. I just wish I had half your courage. You must think I'm pathetic?"

"True bravery is fighting back even though you know you're going to lose. When your heart is beating so fast you're sure it's going to burst at any second, and when fear has made the act of breathing a foreign concept, or when death seems more pleasant than living, but you refuse to let them have that satisfaction. Daphne you were wandless, bound, and outnumbered, yet you still denied them. You fought back and refused to let Crabbe take what was never his to begin with. You are many things Daphne Greengrass, but pathetic and weak are not among them."

"I was still bent over a table in the end. You are the one that saved my virtue, not me."

"That's a load of dung and you know it! You would have found a way."

"No, you're wrong. I was done. I had nothing left."

"Really, because your eyes told me differently. They may have beaten you, but they didn't break you." As her words sunk in, Ginny watched as Daphne's well-crafted Ice Queen persona shattered. Grief, relief, and an unspoken understanding were etched in her

face. Her eyes once again swelled up with tears. Ginny knew what the prideful girl needed even if her ego refused to.

"Now I'm a Weasley, and well we hug... .It's a chemical thing." Ginny said with a shrug before opening her arms and motioning her in. Daphne gave a small laugh.

"Seeing as you literally saved my bum, I guess I could indulge you this one time." Daphne joked in an uneasy voice. She stepped into the hug and was surprised by the comfort that she felt from it. She let everything she was holding in flow out of her. Ginny listened silently, comforting the best she could. When Daphne finally stopped to catch her breath, Ginny shared things with her that only another survivor could. Though their situations were very different, on many levels they were very similar. Some jokes were added in with the weeping and by the time Harry had returned both girls had a better understanding of each other.

"You know, this is the kind of thing that get my imaginative juices flowing," Harry joked in hopes of shifting the mood in the room. The indignant looks on both their faces as they scowled at him was just too sweet. They broke apart and one of Ginny's hands went to her hip, while the other held her wand in a threatening manner.

"Well put a cork in it Git. I like the team I'm on thank you very much."

"Besides, I don't think either of us are the sharing type," Daphne added with her arms crossed over her chest. Though her eyes held a threat, the curve of her lips told him it was for effect only. Ginny huffed out an affirming nod.

"Probably right. Two Alphas at once would probably kill me, but what a way to go." Harry finished with a playful grin as he wiggled his eyebrows.

"Pig!" They both said at the same time.

"Is he always like this?" Daphne asked Ginny as she let out a groan. What he said was totally inappropriate for the situation, and then it dawned on her. He called then both Alphas. His opinion of her hadn't changed. She still had his respect and it surprised her just how much that meant to her.

"Pretty much, but he grows on you after awhile," Ginny answered with a shrug and a smirk.

"Like a fungus." Daphne asked and answered. She wasn't sure if she could go back to being what she once was, but maybe that wasn't a bad thing after all.

"Exactly!" Ginny confirmed.

"Hey!"

"Okay, fungus with a cute bum." Ginny corrected.

"That's better."

"See, you have to stroke their ego every once and again." Ginny joked to Daphne at Harry's expense. Then she blew him a kiss.

"But you can't stroke it too hard or it just gets messy." Daphne joined in and both girls started laughing uncontrollably.

"Hey! Am I going to have to separate you two?"

"What?" They both asked at the same time innocently before continuing to laugh. Harry didn't mind being the brunt of the joke. It was good to see them in better spirits.

"Thanks Harry. I really needed that." Daphne told him when she and Ginny finally stopped giggling. Without thinking she walked over and hugged him, something that surprised all three of them. Harry returned the hug and kissed the top of her head. The smile that spread across her face wasn't missed by Ginny.

"That's what I'm here for, comic relief." He joked.

"Got to work those strengths right Shadow." Daphne teased, then she traced her finger across the back of his hand that she injured earlier today. "I'm really sorry about that. And for being a burden." Harry tilted her head up so she could look him in the eye.

"Unpleasant lessons were learned all around today. To err is to be human. You're not made of ice Daph, you're so much more than that. I also sent a message to my Uncle Moony to make an alliance with

your House. I protect my friends, even the prideful ones that think they're burdens, which they are not. Oh look you seem to be melting." Harry ended with a tease as he wiped a tear from the corner of her eye.

"I don't think I want to be an ice queen anymore," Daphne said before burying her face into his chest. Harry looked over at Ginny for understanding and she gave it without a word. A raised eyebrow stated that they would talk later. He mouthed, "You rock." Ginny just rolled her eyes.

"Good, now why don't you show the Hellcat here the closet, while I take a much needed shower? Afterward we can discuss what were going to do." Harry asked Ginny.

"Hellcat?" Daphne asked confused. Harry tapped the back of the hand she disabled earlier that day. She mouthed "oops", but couldn't help but smile.

"Yeah, that's pretty fitting. I like it, much better than Ice Queen. Now than you mention it, the library did look like all hell had broken loose in there." Ginny added with a grin. Daphne rolled her eyes while giggling.

"Ha, ha, not that I want to, but we all have classes. I'm pretty sure they're going to notice if we're not there."

"No problem. Three house elves are disguised as us and taking notes in class as we speak. If anyone feels the need to talk to them, they will feel the compulsion to not to." Harry answered as if it should have been obvious.

"They can do that?" Daphne asked with shock.

"House elves were meant for so much more than to simply be servants. They are truly marvelous magical creatures. The power that they posses is truthfully more astounding than words can say." Harry left that for them to think about as he went to take a shower.

After Daphne picked out a very eloquent looking outfit, she and Ginny sat in the living room and waited for Harry. Ginny envied her sense of style, but growing up in a poor family she was use to making due with what was readably available. Whenever she was

dragged to some boring upper brow function, because Neville needed arm candy, she felt frightfully uncomfortable. More than a few stray comments passed by her ears. Of course with her newly acquired wealth, she supposed that a new wardrobe wasn't out of the question.

"So you're a Tempest Jaguar. That's pretty impressive. I take it that was your first full transformation?" Daphne asked and brought her out of her current train of thought.

"I didn't think it would take so much out of me. Harry makes it look so easy."

"With time and practice it will be. Now jaguars are chaos bringers. You and Harry have certainly brought that to Hogwarts. If you add in the whole Tempest thing, let just say things are probably going to be very interesting this year."

"It's a talent. You never told me what type of Animagus you are?"

"Lynx," Daphne said casually. Ginny's reaction was anything but that. Daphne read shock and fear on her face. "What?" Ginny swallowed hard before she asked what she was worried about. She had already sensed a connection between Daphne and Harry. She just wasn't sure what the connection was. She knew that Daphne would make a far better Lady Potter than she would. Whoa! Getting ahead of ourselves girl, best stick with the present problem.

"So your Animagus is compatible with Harry's?" Ginny asked nervously. Daphne looked confused at her question for an all of three seconds before she bent over laughing. Ginny scowled and crossed her arms across her chest. She didn't see what was so damn funny. Daphne sensed her distress and calmed herself.

"Perhaps a demonstration will answer your question better," Daphne giggled out before she transformed into her Lynx form. Ginny relaxed immediately, Her Lynx was larger than a regular cat, but smaller than a large dog. She changed back still giggling. "Compatible yes. Practical, ouch, big time ouch." As relief washed over Ginny, she joined Daphne at laughing at the ridiculousness of her question.

"Am I really turning into such an obsessive girlfriend?" Ginny said more to herself than Daphne. Still she got an answer.

"Territorial maybe, but not obsessive. You haven't got control over your Animagus' primal side yet. Your feelings are bound to be more intense than they normally would be. I am such an idiot! It just dawned on me. You're in heat, aren't you?" Daphne whispered the last part. Ginny sheepish grin was her answer.

"My mum told me some Animagi go through heat cycles. The people have to have a strong connection to begin with, but you just met him two days ago, or did you?" Daphne's inquisitive side smelled a secret she needed to unravel.

"Actually we've meet before, it's a long story." Ginny added and waved off the question that Daphne was about to ask.

"Look, I think we both know that there's a bond between Harry and me. I know I can feel it. I'm sure he feels it, and you obviously sense it. It could be an Animagus thing or maybe something more. I'm not really sure myself. What I do know is that he gets me and very few people do. I really don't want to lose that Ginny. I'm not going to lie to you and say I'm not attracted to him. Who wouldn't be? He's drop dead handsome and not an arse about it. I know you have every reason not to trust me, but I want you to know that I would never push for more than friendship with him. I would never do that to a friend, and after everything you have done for me today I hope I can call you one. Besides I've seen the way he looks at you. Just once I wish a bloke would look at me like that."

"You just threw that right out there. I'm such an idiot, and yes I now think of you as a friend."

"Good I don't want any misunderstandings." The clearing of a throat let the two of them know that they were no longer alone. Both their eyes widened with shock before they looked at the doorway to see Harry leaning coolly against it.

"Just how much of our private conversation did you just hear Git?" Ginny asked with a scowl.

"If it was supposed to be private you should have used a silencing charm, but I would never pilfer into a conversation I wasn't a part of. I like my bits the way they are."

"You would do well to remember that. What do you think Hellcat?" Ginny asked as she tried out Daphne's new nickname. The girl smiled brightly, so she guessed that she liked it.

"Well, his heart rate didn't spike, and his body language showed no signs of deception. Still, my witch's intuition says that he's not being completely truthful." Daphne said as she crossed her arms and gave a mock glare. Ginny copied the action.

"I haven't been completely truthful since I was about seven," Harry said as he crossed the room and plopped down on one of the chairs. "But the burden of truth lay with you darlin`." Harry added with a wink.

"Git."

"That's quite the compelling argument Tease, but we'll get back to that later. Now, Aunt Nymphy named my Animagus Shadow, and I just named Daphne's Hellcat, It only fitting that she names yours."

"What kind of demented parent names their kid Nymphy?" Daphne asked them.

"Actually that's a nickname too, but back to the point. You're the first and only living person that has seen her Animagus, so you get to name it"

"Really?" Daphne asked with a mischievous grin that the twins would be proud of.

"I swear if you name me Sparky, I will have to kill you." Ginny threatened her.

"Give me more credit than that. Just let me brew on this for a second." Daphne asked as she pondered what she knew about Ginny against what she saw in the Library. What she had endured in her life and what she felt that Ginny was down to her core. "I GOT IT!"

A/N: There you go. I present to you my Golden Trio. Get your heads out of the gutter, not that kind of trio. Though I think I could probably make that work, the heart of this story will always be Harry and Ginny and I don't want to fuck with that. That doesn't mean that there couldn't be a night of drunken experimentation. Just kidding...or am I?

I know, I'm evil. My wife tells me all the time.

Love interest for Daphne, still undecided. Suggestions anyone? I also left it open for Ginny's Animagus nickname. I've got one picked out, but I'm not committed to it. If anyone comes up with something better, I will give credit where credit is due. As always let me know what you think.

"Well, don't leave us hanging? Tell us already Hellcat." Harry yelled out in frustration. Daphne's dramatic pause was driving him crazy. Ginny looked like she was about to bite through her bottom lip, and he had definite plans for those luscious lips later on.

"Shadow you have no flair for the dramatic at all, but since you insist I will tell you...um, what were we talking about again?" Daphne teased. Ginny screamed out in frustration. It was very apparent that she didn't want to be named Sparky. Harry reached out his hand and made it look like he was choking an invisible person.

"What are you doing?" Daphne asked in mild curiosity at his odd behavior.

"I'm using the force to choke you. What does it look like?" Harry answered with a duh expression.

"The force?" Both girls asked together.

"That's it! We're having a freakin movie night I'm tired of explaining everything." Harry said as he threw both his hands up in the air in frustration. When he was met with more confused expressions he added. "We'll pop popcorn, make nacho's, have a food fight, and then my mum will ground me for making a mess. You'll love it."

"Sweetie, I love the way your mind works. Have I told you that lately?" Ginny asked with a look of complete contentment on her lovely face.

"I'm surprised he didn't suggest a pillow fight." Daphne added with a false glare.

"A lingerie pillow fight? Now that could be fun. See I knew there was a reason I liked you Daph." Harry shot back with a wink.

"He just a randy little bugger, isn't he?" Daphne asked Ginny while shaking her head in disbelief.

"Welcome to my world." Ginny answered as she rolled her eyes at her boyfriend. Then she copied the force choke move he did earlier to which he blew her a kiss. "Then again, he would look cute in a red garter, fishnet stockings, and a nice pair of stilettos." Ginny added with an evil grin.

"No, no, no! Mental picture! Go away, go away!" Daphne yelled as she crunched her eyes shut and massaged her temples. Harry wasn't sure if he should be offended by that or not. Yeah, like that's ever going to happen.

"How's about noooo." Harry answered in his best impersonation of Dr. Evil. The girls gave him a questioning look again at his antics, but the room was soon filled with laughter. They guessed it was one of those Muggle things they would just have to accept, and with it the weight of the day seemed to lighten considerably. None of them seemed to feel the need to regain their respective composure; in the end it was Daphne that achieved it first.

"Celestial Fury or maybe Fury for short." Daphne said as she looked intently at Ginny. The said girl sat up from the position that she was laughing in and looked back in shock.

"Really?" Was all Ginny managed to get out. Harry looked back and forth from Ginny to Daphne, and then back to Ginny again. Daphne was nodding approvingly at Ginny. She in turn mouthed thank you.

"I take it there's a story behind this name?" Harry finally asked both girls nodded without breaking eye contact.

"It's a Celtic Legend that my mum once told me." Daphne told Harry as she broke eye contact with Ginny. "The story goes that a powerful vampire ruled over his land. Once every hundred years he would take a young maiden as a bride in exchange of only killing what he needed to survive. Most of the time, he killed travelers that were passing through his land, so the villagers didn't really care all that much. He would send his servants to collect whichever young maiden took his fancy. When they came to collect their Master's prize none of the villagers would oppose them. Parents would freely hand over their daughters of fear of what would happen if they refused.

The village girls were raised to believe that it was an honor and their sworn duty for the good of the community. Most of the maidens accepted their fate, of course some would resist it, but they always went in the end, save one. She was said to have hair like wildfire and a will to match it. When they came for her she fought back with all she had. It was said that a traveling rogue was the only one to

come to her aid. The two fought back to back until the last of the vampire's servants fell. According to legend they fell in love the moment their eyes met, but isn't that the way these stories always go." Daphne started.

"I always loved that part." Ginny added and continued where Daphne left off. "Well, as you can imagine the vampire was not pleased to say the very least. The next day he sent more servants only to be killed again by the young lover's. And so on and so on it went, until that fateful day when they finally lost.

The village leader slipped the rogue a potion that made him sleep for three days. The maiden was forcibly handed over to the vampire, betrayed by her own people all for the good of the village. Still she fought against the vampire to the very end, but she eventually fell and was turned. When the rogue awoke she had already been in the ground for two days. He wept at her grave through a thunder storm refusing to leave her.

At sunset he sought out the leader of the village and killed him without blinking an eye. The rogue warned the village that if anyone tried to bury the body they would share the betrayer's fate. He then went to the nearest inn and waited for his love to rise. When she did the vampire was waiting for her. He ordered her to kill the one she loved most in the world so her soul would be lost forever. So she sought out her lover and found the remains of her betrayer laying in the street. It was said that she laughed at his disemboweled body before following the trail of blood that led her to her love." Ginny stopped to catch her breath and Daphne took over.

"She never spoke a word to him. Just offered him her hand and he took it without hesitation. She led him to his room. It's said that it was her love for him that allowed her to resist the blood lust. She made love to him for the first and last time that night. Just before sunrise they left the room and wandered out into the street. The vampire watched from his darkened carriage as they waited for the morning sun. He and the villagers watched as she silently turned to dust in her lover's arms.

Now, the vampire knew dark magic and summoned her ashes to him then the carriage sped away to his castle. The rogue followed them and it took a full day and night to reach the vampire's castle. As the sun rose up to meet the last day of his life the rogue waged a

one man siege on the castle. He slaughtered every one of the vampire servants and waited for the dark creature to wake. When the vampire did he was not alone, for the rogue's love was at the vampire's side. By then she had already killed her parents and had lost her soul forever, or so the vampire had thought.

The rogue dropped his sword and offered his neck to his love without pause. A hair's breath from biting him she hesitated and told him that death couldn't stop her from loving him. He told her to drain him so that they would always be together. She gave him his last wish, and took in not only his blood but his soul as well. Reunited once more in body and soul she picked up her dead lover's sword and attacked the vampire.

The battle raged for an hour and a large amount of the castle was destroyed in the brutal clash. Outside another powerful thunderstorm waged its own war. The villager's seeing the error of their ways had come to help the rogue. They bore witness to the tragic climax to the star crossed lovers. On a half destroyed tower the vampire tried to flee. He jumped off the tower and tried to transform into a huge bat. The maiden leapt after him and buried her love's sword to the hilt through his back. The part of the sword that was sticking out of the vampire chest was struck by lightning.

Neither of them was ever seen again. The only proof that it ever happened was the rogue's sword that fell to the ground. Baptized in the vampire's blood that would never wash off. The storm seemed to take on a life of its own, as if they continued their battle in the heavens. The castle was hit repeatedly by lightning until only rubble remained. From that day forward the maiden was referred to as Celestial Fury. When I looked into your Animagus eyes Ginny, that's what I saw. So tell me, am I off or did I hit the mark?"

The silence of the room was deafening as Daphne waited for their response. The similarities were just too numerous to explain away as coincidence. The Vampire Lord demanding his prize, the leader of the village surrendering her for the greater good, and the villager's blindly following what their told. It was enough to make Ginny ill. Harry reached out and grabbed Ginny's hand to steady her. She looked into his eyes and knew that he would die before he would let history would repeat itself.

"I would say that was dead eye accurate." Ginny confessed when she mustered up the strength to look at Daphne. "Kind of creepy how you can do that. I'm just glad you're on our side." Harry had heard this story before, but through a different venue, and not so detailed. If he was correct, then the Blood Sword may very well be real and not just a legend. His mum always told him that legends were always based in fact.

"Fury...I like it. Gin we make our own destiny." Harry added and gave an extra squeeze to her hand to emphasize his point. She gave a weak smile. Sometimes Daphne hated how accurate her guesses could be. She didn't need to know the details, she knew in time she would get it when she had earned their trust.

"You'll get your happy ending Ginny." Daphne told her with absolute conviction. Ginny shot out her other hand to Daphne. The girl took it without reservation. Harry took Daphne's other hand, the Triquetra was complete. The Celtic Trinity Knot held many meanings for some it meant body, mind, spirit, or to others it was power, intellect, love, and in certain circles it meant creator, destroyer, and sustainer. It mattered little, Harry, Ginny, and Daphne represented them all on some level or another.

"Fury, Shadow, and Hellcat, I like's. It has an intimidating sound to it." Ginny speculated.

"No Shadow, Fury, and Hellcat, now that has a better ring to it." Harry modified.

"Why do to two get top billing? It should be Hellcat and her bitches." Daphne finished with before they broke out laughing again. A popping sound alerted Harry that they were no longer alone. A moment later Fred, and Hesta walked into the livingroom wearing Slytherin boy's uniforms. Hesta wasted no time in removing the unwanted garments. As luck would have it, she had the good sense to have her regular clothes under it.

"How'd it go and where's George?" Harry asked them. Fred immediately blushed and started to rub the back of his neck. Hesta had a toothy grin that was more than a little unsettling, even for someone as experienced as Harry was.

"George had to go see Angelina off. She was only back for the one day you see. She's got a game in Paris tomorrow. As for the little prank we just pulled. Well, you see- the thing is-"

"Harry James Potter! What did you try to make my brothers do?" Ginny shot at him with a glare that sent a chill down his spine. He gave her an innocent shrug that she didn't buy for a second.

"Oh stop pussyfooting around and tell him already." Hesta ordered her new lover as she slapped him hard in the bum. So hard in fact that he went up on his toes and winced. Ginny looked amused by the display, and Daphne looked shocked. If it was because she had never seen a female Goblin before, or the fact that she realized that the two had already had sex Harry couldn't decide.

"Well it started off as planned. Me and the green temptress here took the Polyjuice potion to the fourth floor corridor and took our positions in the broom cupboard there." Fred started.

"Are you mental? That is the most used broom cupboard in the school. Terry Boot and Fay Dunbar practically have their own plank on the ruddy door. She's the biggest gossip in the school. What were you thinking sending them there Harry?" Daphne asked in total shock. Harry should have known better than that. The smile that spread across his face told her he did. He then looked over to Fred and Hesta.

"What happened?"

"Well, we did like you suggested and downed the potion before class let out. Sorry Harry, I just couldn't do it. I know it was Hesta, but she still looked like Crabbe." Fred started.

"Yes, he was being a little girl about it, so I took matters into my own hand." Hestia continued as she rolled her eyes.

"Quite literally I might add."

"I didn't hear you complaining?" Hesta shot at him with a pointed look.

"Well no bloke is going to complain when a girl does that."

"Do you want it to happen again?"

"Yes"

"Then quite you're bitching. Just stand there and look pretty. Momma got this." Fred was about to retort when Harry whistled and brought to their attention that others were in the room.

"If I'm reading through the lines correctly, am I to assume that when the door was opened Boot and Dunbar had the pleasure of seeing Crabbe giving Goyle a hummer?" Harry asked. Hesta winked at him and Fred turned red and looked anywhere but at his sister. Ginny gasped and Daphne closed her eyes and started to massage her temples again. It seemed that she was trying to erase yet another mental image from her mind. That was the sight George walked into.

"What did I miss?" He asked the group.

"Well it seems that thanks to Fred and Hesta, Crabbe and Goyle now have the nickname Kneel and Bob." Harry told him.

"Neal and Bob?"

"That's Kneel with a K sweetie, do try to keep up." Daphne teased the confused George. It seemed she had recovered from the mental picture quicker than she did last time. It was then that George recognized her. Daphne was afraid he was going to go into Gryffindor mode, and call her evil of something lame like that. He just smiled at her, but the way he was looking made her blush a little.

"Just my luck they go and change the girl's uniform after we graduate." George told Fred, but didn't take his eyes off Daphne.

"I don't think Angelina is going to like you ogling other girls George." Ginny said with her wand pointing at him. Daphne had been through a lot today and didn't need for her idiot brother perving on her. If she had looked over at Daphne, she would see by the smile on her face that suggested she wasn't minding all that much.

"We're keeping it casual I'll have you know, she's focusing on her career and travels a lot. Neither of us wants to end up resenting each other down the line for...missed opportunities." George told

her, and Ginny nodded her head in understanding. "Besides, I was appreciating, not ogling. There's a difference you know."

"Good, now that that's all settled. Hestia I need you to give this to Griphook, he'll know what to do." Harry said as he handed her a sealed scroll. He then handed Fred and George another vial and vault key each. "I need Crabbe and Goyle to be seen going to Gringotts and emptying their Trust Vaults, try to look nervous doing it. Then go to the Quidditch Supply shop and buy two of the new Firebolts that just came out. Fly out of Diagon Alley; make a big display out of it." Harry finished. It hit Daphne in a wave; they didn't have to hide the fact that Crabbe and Goyle were dead or how they died. Hogwarts gossip was like an article from Rita Skeeter, it only required a sliver of truth and a lot of imagination. By dinner there would be so many theories that the truth would never come to light.

"He's just his own special brand of evil genius," Daphne said to Ginny with a look of awe. "I would have never thought up something as devious as that, and I'm a bloody Slytherin."

Due to her upbringing Narcissa Black as she was now called had been taught the benefits of being patient. She prided herself for mastering this subtle art, for it had served her well. Even as gifted as she was at it, she knew that she had reached her limits.

Finding Rose Lancaster was not a terribly difficult feat. Tedious yes, but not very difficult for a Witch of her caliber. The poor woman suffered a complete mental breakdown shortly after retiring from the Ninth Street Orphanage. The unfortunate Muggle that she was married to for over forty years couldn't for the life of him remember that he was ever married at all, even with the endless sea of pictures that were all around his house. His family probably mistook it for Alzheimer's, but Narcissa knew better. Whoever was behind this was good, but didn't take into fact that the Witch that came looking for this woman was a daughter of the House of Black.

The man's mental defenses were nonexistent, and the pathetic excuse for the charm on his mind was laughable at best. Whoever performed it was either not expecting anyone to figure it out so they didn't put forth the proper effort, or just plain weak in magic? Regardless, she was able to return the man his mind and at least forty years of memories with his wife. She wished she could have done more. She was a Witch for Merlin's sake!

What she didn't expect was how her heart felt lighter when she looked into the man's eyes and saw the memories return. Nor the tears that swelled in her eyes when he thanked her for the little gift she had given him. These Muggles were a strange lot, but the thought of getting to know them better didn't seem all that bad.

It seemed that they chose to hide her in plain sight. After going to the hospital that her husband told her she was at. Damn Muggles and their annoying rules on disclosure, it took a few mind probes but she found out where she was transferred to. After seven different hospitals and even more mind probes she found that Mrs. Lancaster was taken to St. Mungo's of all places. These people were really starting to piss her off.

Taking a wild shot Narcissa went straight to the fourth floor and directly to the Janus Thickey Ward. Their sitting in a chair looking out a window was Rose Lancaster. As she approached Rose an elderly Healer approached her.

"Hello, I'm Healer Osborn are you a friend of Rose?"

"I'm afraid I've never met her before. She was my last lead. I was hoping she could help me find a little girl's parents." Narcissa felt that honesty would serve her better. Apparently Lily had rubbed off on her more than she thought. Of course the Ministry documentation she presented the Head Healer said she had Auror status, as did all Marauders thanks to Sirius. That should cover any encumbrances that the Healer might throw at her. Sometimes bureaucracy is a good thing if one knows how to use it properly.

"That's a shame, I'm afraid that poor Rose can't help anyone anymore," Healer Osborn said sadly.

"What happened to her?"

"One of my Trainee Healer was taking a tour of a Muggle Hospital and recognized her. She was brought here. It seems that she been repeatedly Obliviated over several years."

"Do you know how many times?"

"Our best guess is close to twenty. No one comes back from something like that. I'm afraid the woman she was is gone for good. I'm sorry dear, but I don't think she's going to be able to help you find that girl's parents."

"Would you mind if I sit with her for awhile?"

"Certainly, she doesn't get many visitors."

"But she does get visitors? You wouldn't happen to have a list of them do you."

"You just don't give up do you?"

"It's not in my nature."

"I'll be right back," Healer Osborn said before leaving Narcissa with Rose Lancaster. She sat down next to her as the woman looked blankly out the window. She reached out and took the woman's hand. Narcissa had hoped that some human interaction might spark some response. No such luck.

"Hello Rose, you don't know me, but I want you to know that I've met your husband earlier today." She looked for any sign of recognition, but found none. Narcissa pushed forward. "He misses you very much." Still no response perhaps it was time to change tactics.

"I talked to Adam." Rose's eye twitched for a second, and then she was lost in her own world again. All those years watching over children that weren't her own, perhaps on some level they were. Mother's instinct, they could never take that from you.

"He's a good boy. I know what they did to him." Her bottom lip quivered.

"Emma made it to Hogwarts. She has people that care about her there." Was that a smile?

"I need to find her parents." Her brows crunched together for a moment then nothing. A Trainee Healer passed by and Narcissa felt his eyes on her. She repressed the urge to snap her head around and glare at him. She had made them, but they didn't need to know

that. She slipped her wand out and silently cast the charm to ensure their privacy.

"If I can find them, then maybe I can help both Emma and Adam. They were meant to be friends." Rose gave a little nod. That's not a coincidence. A smile ran across Narcissa's glamour altered face.

"The cat lady took that from them didn't she?" Rose slowly closed her eyes and then opened them again. Narcissa was starting to get the feeling she wasn't as bad off as she appeared. She silently reactivated the charm to detect magic. Rose's wedding ring had a strong protection charm on it. One or both of the squibs parents were probably in Slytherin. Before she could confirm this, Healer Osborn came back with the Visitor Ledger. She gave it to Narcissa and told her that she had rounds to make. One look at the ledger told her all she needed to know. Several different visitors appeared to have the same hand writing. It seemed that Dr. D. Fudge was now Mrs. D. Fudge. I do believe I've just found the cat lady's alias.

Narcissa took out a compact to check her makeup and scan the room with the mirror. She wasn't at all surprised to see that the Trainee Healer kept looking in their direction. He was being too obvious about it to be one of them. Most likely he was paid or threatened to keep an eye on Rose. She would have to Obliviate him before she left.

"Rose I know they're still watching you. I'll be back when their eyes are sleeping. Daughters of the House of Black never give up." Narcissa whispered in her ear as she gave her a hug. She never felt a folded piece of parchment being slipped into her robe. She needed to talk to Andy and Lily, come midnight they were going to break her out.

Arthur Weasley just returned from lunch with his son Bill. It was a very eye opening experience to say the least. The Order Meeting that he went to last night was a complete waste of time. Unless the goal was to make his wife insanely mental, if that was the true purpose then he would have to admit it was a smashing success.

Augusta Longbottom's constant snide remarks on Ginny's supposed betrayal of her precious Neville only enraged his wife more. She all but said that his daughter would be nothing more than Longbottom House entertainment if she had anything to say about it. He was well

aware of how certain Noble Houses conducted business. Concubines were often offered up to sweeten the deal as they say. Of course Neville played up the mortally wounded boyfriend for all it was worth. Molly begged for him to give Ginny another chance. She swore that if was the last thing she would do she would free her daughter from Potter's immoral influence.

He actually had to stop his wife from accusing Lily's son of using an Unforgivable to control Ginny. To accuse a Noble Lord with no proof of such an act would have brought down grave consequences on his family. He had only met Lily Potter the one time, but he highly doubted that she would raise a son that would do something like that. To have stated that thought out loud and in the presence of his wife had earned him a night on the couch. Not that he minded all that much; he wasn't too terrible fond of his wife when she went on these kinds of rants, which was becoming more frequent of late.

He still loved his wife as much now as when he was a hormone driven teenager, however there were times that she would push him to his limits. She was a good wife and a very loving mother. He never doubted that, but she wasn't without...issues.

He had allowed her to rule the roost as they say, because she seemed to need the control. After what she had endured in her life it seemed like a little thing to surrender for his wife's piece of mind. He was now seeing that perhaps that a series of check and balances would have been a better decision.

Molly for all her strong opinions and single-minded determination was for lack of a better word a follower, and Dumbledore's word she followed without question. She was an honest person and naively thought that Dumbledore and the Longbottom's were too. His job at the Ministry had stripped him of that illusion long ago.

He supposed that his faith in Dumbledore first started to falter when he let things get so out of control during Ginny's first year. A Wizard as old and knowable as him should have figured out that a Basilisk was on the loose with the clues that were presented. Ginny's Life Debt to Neville never felt right to him. Molly and he were so overwhelmed the night Ginny was returned to them that he didn't challenge Dumbledore about it. Arthur was just happy Ginny was alive. They misguidedly took Dumbledore's word without pause. Every time he thought to look into it the contemplation would leave

his mind just as quickly as it came. Over time he just accepted it as fact.

When he was notified that Ginny was captured by He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named psychotic second in command Arthur was understandable enraged, but when Dumbledore told him Ginny was a Casualty of War his faith in the man shattered completely. He had failed his daughter and in his grief fell into darkness.

It was Remus Lupin that pulled him out. He had secretly told Arthur that Ginny had been rescued and was recovering in a very safe place. Remus assured him that she would be back home in a week, but blind faith was not something he would give to anyone again. He didn't let up until Remus told him that James's Lily-flower was watching over her. He knew of whom Remus spoke and knew she would protect Ginny with her life if need be. From that day forward Remus Lupin had his trust and Lily Potter his undying gratitude.

After reading the morning Daily Prophet, Arthur arranged for lunch with his son to get the real story. He got to meet Bill's lady and he would have to admit the boy sure could pick them. She was quite beautiful and even more opinionated, he had learned to his regret. Arthur had inquired about young Lord Potter's intentions for his daughter. His words may have been accusing in nature, he really wasn't sure. What he got in response was a drink in his face and a lot of unfriendly French words that he didn't understand thrown at him in rapid succession. After she stormed off, Bill informed him that Fleur and Harry were childhood friends. Arthur also learned from Bill that he owed the young Lord a very heartfelt thank you. When he opened his office door and saw Molly waiting for him, he knew in the pit of his stomach that things had just gotten worse.

"You were quiet at lunch today Sirius. Is there something you need to talk about?" Lily asked attentively as she walked back to her classroom with Sirius. When he gave no response that he had heard her, she slid her hand into his and hugged his arm that was on her side, then put her head on his shoulder. "You know that I'm going to get it out of you sooner or later Mutt. Come on, I'll scratch you behind the ears." Lily teased and got a laugh in response, but it was gone to soon. "I'll even rub your tummy." She added, but he barely registered that he was listening. She decided it was time to pull out all the stops.

"I'll show you my boobs." Now, that ought to do it.

"Really?" Sirius asked after he almost snapped his neck to look at her.

"No, just seeing if you were paying attention." Lily answered with a giggle.

"I hate it when you do that." Sirius growled out. Lily laughed and reached up to playfully scratched Sirius behind his ear.

"Men really are simple creatures. Promise to show them your boobs and you have their undivided attention," She said as if she was talking to a dog. "Just imagine what I could get you to do for me if I offered to put on a naughty cowgirl outfit and give you a lap dance." Lily finished with wiggling her eye brows and gave him a smile that could melt ice.

"With chaps and spurs?" Sirius asked with a hopeful expression.

"And nothing else." Lily teased with a wink. Sirius's eyes widened and then narrowed.

"I would call your bluff." Sirius countered, he wasn't going to fall for that again.

"Who's bluffing?" Lily told him pointedly.

"Really?"

"No"

"Arrrrhhh! Why am I friends with you?"

"Oh you love the abuse and you know it." Lily shot back as she bumped his hip with hers. Sirius started laughing, because he knew she was right. She always knew how to get him out of his moods. He probably would have turned into a bitter man like Snape if she hadn't been there to anchor him. He bumped her hip back with his as they continued down the hall with Lily's head back on his shoulder.

"You really seem to be in a good mood today. After that Howler Harry got, I would have thought you would be in a right foul mood."

"Actually, I haven't felt this light in years, and I have Molly Weasley to thank for it." Lily grinned out.

"Holy Shite! You went after her didn't you?"

"Did you think I was going to let her off with just a Howler?"

"No I suppose not." Sirius answered with a chuckle. "You didn't kill her did you?"

"No, I just unleashed sixteen years of bottled up emotions all at once, it was quite liberating actually, but there was a moment there when I was really tempted to hurt her. I may have said a few things that I'm not completely proud of, but she implied some really nasty things about you and me. It would seem you down played what that bitch Skeeter wrote about me."

"I'm not going to apologize for that. You had enough to deal with. The last thing you needed was to have to deal with the collection of lies she was spewing out."

"How bad was it, and does Harry know?" Lily asked even though she was sure she didn't want the answer.

"One very, and two if he did she would be dead right now. It was sixteen years ago Lils, I would have assumed people would have forgotten about it, or realized it was a pile of dragon dung to begin with. That was one of the reasons that we got the hag under our control to begin with."

"There are still some that blindly believe everything she writes as if Merlin himself had written it." Lily's statement was laced with resentment.

"Good, we can use that to our advantage."

"Don't change the subject Sirius. With the exception of sex, you have played the part of husband and father for me and Harry as well as James could have done. I know I tease you all the time, but I am grateful that you never left us."

"And I never will. You and Harry are my family," Sirius said as he stopped and looked at her pointedly.

"I saw a Grim Patronus running across the grounds last night. Kind of says it all, doesn't it? Are you still in love with her?"

"Just as much as you're still in love with James."

"She's another man's wife."

"She was my mate first, and like it or not she always will be. I foolishly thought that if I slept with enough women I would burn out this hold she had on me. I know now that will never happen. I talked to her for only five minutes today and...Oh who am I kidding, she had me hooked in one minute flat. It took all my self-control not to follow her through the floo."

"WHAT? She was here? Oh, so that's her scent I smell on you. You better not get too close to Daphne Greengrass. She's an Animagus, if she smells her mum on you. Well, let's just say that's not going to be a very pleasant conversation."

"She already knows that me and Gaby were lovers."

"You told her?"

"She kind of tricked it out of me. Clever little witch, she's definitely her mother's daughter through and through."

"Just how deep are you?" Lily asked with a hand on her hip.

"Half way to China luv, half bloody way to China." Sirius shrugged out. Lily walked up to him and moved as if she was going to hug him. As he leaned down to accept it, she smacked him in the back of his head.

"Ow! What was that for?"

"Because you're an idiot!"

"Could you be more specific?"

"As I see it you have two choices. One let her go. It will be hard, but not impossible. Two grab onto her and never let go. The choice is yours." Lily told him sharply.

"Wait, are you actually encouraging me to?"

"Sixteen years ago I would hex you for even thinking it, but I'm not that woman anymore, nor are you the same man, and the Greengrass's for that matter. Life has a way of changing your view of many things. Take it from a woman that hasn't had the love of her life to keep her warm at night. If James was still alive and the only thing standing between us was my magic. I would surrender it in a heartbeat."

"It's more complicated than that Lils."

"Then uncomplicated it Mutt, since when has there been a problem the two of you couldn't overcome? She's had sixteen years to think about it. She used the floo in your office for a reason; I think you owe it to her to hear what she has to say. Then together decide what's best for the two of you. Or here's a shot in the dark. The three of you could act like adults and come to an understanding."

"You really are an amazing woman Lily. I would have been lost without you." Sirius told her. She knew from the tone in his voice what he was talking about. Lily cupping his face into her hands, and looked tenderly at him.

"Right back at you." She told him and was hard pressed to keep her voice even. "But if you see your shot, you take it. Don't worry about me and Harry. You take your shot."

A/N: I want to thank all of you that gave your suggestions for Ginny's Animagi nickname. There is no Celtic Legion of Celestial Fury. The story was loosely based off a story I made up when I was in High School. It was about a blood Feud between a Vampire and a Ghost. I never wrote it down so it only exists in my twisted head.

SoccerReader, you wanted to know more about Narcissa's friendship with Lily. I believed i covered that in Chapter 8 and 11. If you go back and read those chapters it might make more sense.

My Beta Reader is involved in another project right now, so I'm riding solo on this chapter...be nice.

I want to thank EmlynMara for sending me a PM with mistakes that I made. I hope this version is better.

Chp24